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~~a. 1. 209~~



*Aedes Christi  
in Academia Oxoniensi.*

~~C. F. H. S.~~

By

Baltus (Jean Francois)

BF

1761

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~~P. 3. 6. 6~~

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Baltus

12.15

A N  
A N S W E R  
T O  
Mr. de FONTENELLE's  
History of Oracles.

In which Mr. *Van-Dale's* System concerning  
the Authors of the Heathen Oracles, and  
the Cause and Time of their Silence is  
confuted: And the Opinion of the Fathers  
upon that Subject vindicated.

---

*Translated from the French.* Baltus

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W I T H  
Some REFLECTIONS upon the REMARKS of  
Mr. Le CLERC, in his *Bibliothèque Choisie*,  
In a PREFACE.

---

*By a Priest of the Church of England.*

---

*To which is prefix'd a LETTER to the Translator,  
by the Reverend George Hickes, D. D.*

---

LONDON, Printed by W. B. for Henry Clements at the Half-  
Moon in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1709.

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A

# LETTER

Written by

*Dr. George Hickes,*

TO THE

AUTHOR of this *Translation.*

SIR,

**W**ITH your Book I return  
you very many thanks for  
the great benefit and plea-  
sure I have had in reading of it, both  
as it is a solid, and clear Answer to  
de Fontenelle, and his Master Van-  
Dale, and as it is in my judgment,  
one of the best Translations I ever  
read, of any Original into another Lan-  
guage. The French must no more boast  
so much of their Vaugelas's, and

A 2

D'Ab-

## TO the TRANSLATOR.

D'Ablancourts: *believe me, Sir, you have equall'd if not outdone them all; and to convince you I do not flatter you, if you can overcome your modesty so far, as to let it be printed, I will venture this my censure of it to the World, and upon me be all the blame from the severest Criticks, if it do not answer the Character I have here given of it in the opinion of All, who truly understand the propriety, and purity of the French and English Tongues. In reading of it I could not find to the best of my observation one French word, or phrase in it, but all pure and natural English; and I was also exceedingly pleased to find how happily you had transfused into it all the Spirit, and Sublime of the Original, from the beginning to the end, which will make it as useful, and delightful to all English Readers, as if it had been Originally English; and more especially acceptable to all those, who understand both Tongues. Moreover the great care, and pains you have taken to make the Author's Citations more exact,*

TO the TRANSLATOR.

*exact, and easie to be found, than in the Original, will very much gratify all curious, and inquisitive Readers, who understand the learned Languages; and all English-men who have any veneration left for the Fathers, or love, and zeal for the Christian Religion, will thank you for the accurate Margin, as well as the Text, and for giving your Country a most correct, and seasonable Book at a time of need, when so many write to dishonour the former, and to bring the latter into question and disrepute, and to make the whole Christian System, and the most eminent, and authentick accounts of Miracles, by which the World was converted to it, to be the product of ignorance, and credulity, if not pure fiction, and cheat.*

*But in this admirable Answer to de Fontenelle, which you by your version have made yours, the English Reader will see one of the most eminent Miracles that attended the propagation of Christianity, I mean the silencing and decay of Oracles, clearly proved.*

## TO the TRANSLATOR.

*out of the Fathers against the exceptions of Van-Dale, and his French Disciple. And as the Author of it, whoever he was, hath learnedly, and plainly vindicated their testimony, as to that Miracle: So another writer of his Country the \* learned Tillemont, as is observed by a † learned, and judicious Author of ours, hath vindicated their Reports of the Statue erected to Simon Magus at Rome, against the exceptions of Le Clerc, who hath the confidence to scandalize it as a Fable. But besides the zeal which God hath given you to translate this vindication of them into the Language of your Country, I assure you there are other learned Pens at work to defend them against their modern Adversaries, as well as to translate many useful, and convincing pieces of them into English, as, I hope, you will see in a little time to your Satisfaction. And give*

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\* Memoirs pour servir à L'Histoire Ecclesiastique. Tome II. premiere partie. Notes sur Simon le Magicien.

† Defensio S. Augustini adversus Joannis Phereponi in ejus opera Abusiadversiones. p. 176.

## TO the TRANSLATOR.

*me leave, Sir, to tell you for your encouragement, that I find by some observations, and correspondencies, that the Study of the Fathers, and Spirit of Christian Antiquity begins to revive among us, and I pray God increase it more and more, to the rebuking that Spirit of Scepticism, and Infidelity, which is gone out into the World, and to the correction of those Writers at home, and abroad, who have done what they can, to set Men loose from the old received Christian Principles, upon which the Church both as a Sect, and Society is built.*

*One of the chief of this pernicious sort of Men is Mr. LeClerc, against \* whose Cavils, if you publish your Translation of it, you are bound to defend the Answer to de Fontenelle. The World, Sir, will expect it from you, and therefore, permit me to tell you, you must resolve either to suppress your noble Translation to the great prejudice of the Publick, or to reply to Mr. Le-*

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\* *Bibliothèque Choisie, Tome xiii. Artic. iii.*

To the TRANSLATOR.

Clerc, which will give you a farther opportunity of employing the Talents God hath given you; of doing the Lord, who hath redeemed you, and his Church rewardable service; of stirring up other learned Men by your example; and of correcting one of the greatest Latitudinarians, that this wicked age of free-thinkers, and free-writers, and I might add of free-livers, hath any where produced.

These considerations, Sir, I hope, will prevail with you to vindicate your Author against him, and if you purpose to do so, it will be convenient to give the World notice of your resolution in some Advertisement, or Preface, which will, in my opinion, make your Book more grateful to the Publick, as well as to

Your most Humble Servant,

GEO. HICKES.

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THE  
P R E F A C E  
OF THE  
TRANSLATOR.

**T**HE learned *Author* of this *Answer* to the *History of Oracles* informs us in his *Preface*, how great a Victory the Christian Religion obtain'd over the Heathen, by putting its Oracles to silence, and the Devils who presided over them to flight, in proportion as the Gospel was publish'd throughout the World; how much this conduc'd to the early Propagation of it among the *Gentiles*; what Advantages its Apologists in the first Ages drew from this astonishing Event; and therefore how much stress the Fathers, and all the Ecclesiastical Writers since, have constantly laid upon this Argument: And his whole ensuing *Treatise* is in a manner one continu'd and most irrefragable Proof of all he has there asserted.

He

## The PREFACE

He might therefore well think it proper to undertake the Defence of an Argument for Religion, which had not only Truth but Prescription of its side; especially in this Age of Scepticism and Infidelity, when there are so many who both secretly undermine, and openly assault our Holy Religion, and so few that have the Courage and Constancy to defend her. Nor was the Cause more deserving of a Vindication, than he a fit Person to be the Advocate, who in this excellent Discourse has shew'd himself a Writer equal to the noblest Argument, as this is an Argument worthy of the ablest Writer. It is great pity his Modesty has prevail'd with him to conceal the Name of so valuable an Author from the World.

And what this judicious Writer has so well said for the seasonableness of the *Original*, may be equally alledg'd for that of the *Translation*: I wish there were a like proportion between the Performances. If that had been requir'd, the *Answer* might have waited as long for a *Translation*, as the *History* did for an *Answer*, and at last not have pay'd that expectation half so well. However, it may be some Plea for deferring this Work no longer, that tho' the *History of Oracles* remain'd unanswer'd twenty Years, yet I believe it was hardly publish'd so many Weeks, before it was translated into *English*; and certainly there was as much haste  
of

## of the TRANSLATOR.

of translating the *Answer*. When both the Original and the Translation had been now so long without any Reply, it could not but be high time to reply to them both. The Antidote ought at least to keep pace with the Poison, and the Zeal of those few that dare appear in defence of Religion, to bear some proportion to the Malice of that Multitude, who are not afraid to oppose, and even to insult it.

It is true, we are told by an *Author*<sup>a</sup>, to whom I shall presently have occasion to speak, *That the Point here in dispute is no Article of our Religion*; and by the *Historian*<sup>b</sup>, whom that *Author* defends, *That Christianity has no need of false proofs*. But 'tis begging the Question, to call the silence of Oracles a false Proof of Christianity: And if the following *Treatise* evince it to be a good and substantial Proof, as I think it does beyond all dispute, and as all Christian Writers have ever accounted it, till Mr. *Van-Dale* and Mr. *Dé Fontenelle* took upon them to disabuse, as they pretend, the rest of Mankind in this particular; that will be reason enough for insisting upon and defending this Point, tho' it be no Article of our Religion; the very Articles themselves having some dependence upon it, as it is such a Proof.

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<sup>a</sup> Bibliothèque Chrétienne, Tom. xlii. Artie. iii. p. 185.

<sup>b</sup> Histoire des Oracles, p. 6.

## The PREFACE

I need not say how well the learned Author has made good that Argument; nor can any one say it so effectually, as his incomparable *Answer* it self does, in perusing of which the judicious Reader will discover, even through the imperfections of this *Translation*, that perspicuity of Method, and strength of Reasoning, and so happy a mixture of great Learning, sound Judgment, and Christian Temper, that we may reasonably hope this Discourse has put the last Hand to the Controversy; and that the Dispute about the Authors of the Heathen Oracles, and the Cause and Time of their Cessation will for the future be as utterly silenc'd, as the Oracles themselves are.

Nor is it any great impediment to these hopes, that Mr. *Le Clerc*, what from that ill-will he bears to the Fathers, and is so ready to gratify upon all occasions, and the Inclination he has to favour such Arguments, as tend to weaken the Foundations of Reveal'd Religion, has already thought fit to attack <sup>c</sup> this *Answer*: Since there is nothing of substance in what he says against it, but what had either been said before by Mr. *Van-Dale* and Mr. *De Fontenelle*, and is already fully answer'd, or had been foreseen, and is sufficiently obvi-

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<sup>c</sup> Biblioth. Choise ubi supra.

of the TRANSLATOR.

ated by the learned *Author*. I cannot forbear giving one instance of this, because it is the most material Objection in all his *Remarks*, and strikes at the very Foundation of that receiv'd Opinion concerning the Authors of the Heathen Oracles, which this *Answer* to Mr. *De Fontenelle* undertakes to defend, against that *History* and Mr. *Vandale's System*.

The instance is this, That whereas the former of those *Writers* is censur'd in this *Treatise*<sup>d</sup> for having follow'd the latter in maintaining an Opinion, concerning the Subject now mention'd, contrary to that, not only of most Heathens, but of all Christians, from the first Ages down to our own, and particularly of all the *Fathers* and *Ecclesiastical Writers*, who are produc'd as evidence in this behalf<sup>e</sup>: Mr. *Le Clerc* finds a Flaw in the universality of this Tradition, and pretends to shew, that both *Origen*<sup>f</sup> and *Eusebius*<sup>g</sup> were of a different Opinion in this Matter, from that which the *Answerer* endeavours to support in part by their Authority, especially by that of *Eusebius*. To prove this he cites the two first Chapters of *Eusebius's* fourth Book *de Preparatione Evangelicâ*, and a Passage in the beginning of the seventh Book of *Origen* against *Celsus*;

<sup>d</sup> *Answ.* p. 7, 17, 50.

<sup>e</sup> *Idem.* p. 16, 67, 76, &c. 83, &c. 89, 100, &c. 126, 172.

<sup>f</sup> *Biblioth. Choif. ubi suprà*, p. 190, &c.

<sup>g</sup> *Ibid.* p. 200, &c.

## The PREFACE

in which places he pretends these Fathers have shewn, that the Heathen Oracles, in their Opinion, were nothing but the contrivance and imposture of Men; tho' to accommodate themselves to the Sentiments of the Heathens in this particular, they chose to maintain, that they were deliver'd by Devils.

The substance of what is said in those Passages is this: *Origen*<sup>b</sup> in Answer to what *Celsus* had objected, that the Christians despis'd the Heathen Oracles, and valu'd none but their own, says, "He might collect  
" many things out of their Philosophers in  
" confutation of their Oracles, but grant-  
" ing that what was said of them was not  
" all Fiction, and the contrivance of Men,  
" he would prove that no Deity was con-  
" cern'd in them, but that they were the

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<sup>b</sup> Lib. vii. contra Celsum, p. 332. Λέγων ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι κα-  
τασκευῶν χρηστικῶν, ὅτι δυνατὸν ἔστι ἡμῖν, συνάψαι  
ἀπὸ Ἀριστοτέλους, καὶ τὰ τῶν Περικλέους φιλοσοφησάντων, καὶ  
ὅλην εἰπεῖν εἰς ἀναστροφὴν τῶν περὶ τῆς Πυθίας καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν  
χρηστικῶν λόγων· δυνατὸν δὲ καὶ τὰ λεγόμενα περὶ Ἐπικύρου  
καὶ τοῖς ἀσπαζομένοις αὐτὸν τὸν λόγον περὶ τῆς αὐτῆς φαντασίας  
δείξαι ὅτι καὶ Ἑλλήνων τινὲς ἀνατρέπουσι τὰς νομισθείσας καὶ  
θαυμαστέας ἐν πάσῃ Ἑλλάδι θεοπροπείας· ἀλλὰ γὰρ  
δεδοσθαι, μὴ εἶναι πλάσματα, μηδὲ περιποιήσεις ἀνθρώ-  
πων περὶ θεοφροσύνης, τὰ περὶ τῆς Πυθίας καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ χρησ-  
τικῶν· ἰδὼμεν ἔν, εἰ μὴ καὶ ἔγωγε διὰ τοῖς φιλοσόφους ἔξε-  
τάμενοι τὰ πλάσματα ἀποδείκνυμι, ὅτι καὶ πῶς ὁρῶμεν  
ἀπὸ τῶν ταῦτα τὰ μαντεῖα καὶ ἀναστροφῶν περὶ τῆς, ὅτι θεοὶ  
τινὲς εἰσι παρὰ αὐτοῖς· ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν δαίμονες τινὲς  
φύλοι, καὶ πλάσματα ἐχθρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, καὶ κα-  
λὸν οὐκ ἔστι τὴν ψυχὴν ἀνοδοῦν, καὶ εἰ ἀρετῆς πορεύειν, καὶ τὴν  
ἀληθινῆς εὐσεβείας ἀποκαλέσασιν περὶ τῆς Θεοῦ.

" work

## of the TRANSLATOR.

“work of evil Demons. And this he immediately proceeds to prove, and pursues the Argument through several Pages.

*Eusebius* in like manner arguing against

<sup>i</sup> De *Evangel.* L. 4. cap. 1. pag. 131. Τὸ δὴ τρίτον φέρε *Κυριώτατα* τί ποτε χρὴ νομίζειν τὰς ἐν τοῖς ἑσάνοις ἐμφωλόμεναις δυνάμεσι. πότερ τι τῶν ἀσείας καὶ ἀσάβας, καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς θείας, ἢ τῶν ἀπάντων τὰ ἐναντία· ἄλλως μὲν ἐν τάχα ἀνθρώποις, καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐφοδίων λόγον, πλάνην ἐστὶν τὸ πᾶν, καὶ γούτων ἀνδρῶν τεχνάσματά τε καὶ ραδιουργίας ὑποστήσας, καθόλου περὶ ἑσάνων καὶ δόξαν ὡς μὴ ἐστὶ θεῶ, ἀλλὰ μὴ δὲ παντὶ δαίμονι ἐστὶν νομίζειν τὰ περὶ αὐτῶν θρυλλώμενα.

Et cap. 2. pag. 133. “Εν δὲ τι περὶ τοῖς εἰρημίοις, μέγιστον ἂν εἴη καθεστώς κεφάλαιον, ὡς ἥδη καὶ ἔσαν θεοφόρων, αὐτῶν δὴ τῶν μέγιστα ἐξεργασθῆναι, θεολόγων τὴν αὐτοῖς καὶ περὶ τῶν πλείους ἢ μόνον πάλαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ἡμῶν καθ’ ἡμᾶς αὐτοῖς, ἐπὶ τῇ θεοσοφίᾳ ταύτῃ βοηθήσαντες, διὰ βασάνων αἰκίας ἐπὶ τῶν ῥωμαϊκῶν δικαστηρίων, καὶ πᾶσι ἑξερῶν τῶν πλάνων ἀνδρῶν ἀπάτης γίνεσθαι, καὶ γούσιαν τελεχνασμένων, τὸ πᾶν ἐστὶν ὁμολογήσαντες· οἱ γὰρ καὶ τῶν πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν, καὶ τὰς μηδίδας τὰ κακοεχέμενα, καὶ πρὸς αὐτῶν ἐν ὑπομνήμασι ἀρεθείσας φωνὰς ἐνεσφάσαντο· διὸ δὴ καὶ τῶν ἀξίων τῶν ὀλεθρίων πλάνης δίκης ἐκίσταντες, πάλιν λόγον ἀνεκάλυψαν, αὐτοῖς ἑσάνοις καὶ τῶν δηληνίων ἀποδείξιν πεισάμενοι.

Et pag. 136. Ταῦτα δὴ τις καὶ πλείων τῶν ἐν τῶν ἑσάνων, εἴποι ἂν μὴ θεῶς ἐστὶν, μὴ δὲ μὴ δαίμονας, καὶ τῶν καὶ πόλεως χρησθέντων αὐτοῖς πλάνων, καὶ ἀπάντων ἀνδρῶν γούτων· καὶ ἥσαντες παρ’ αὐτοῖς ἑλλήσιν ὅλοι διὰ φιλοσοφίας διαπρεπῆς αἰρέσεις, ταύτης περιεσφάμενοι καὶ δόξης· ὡς οἱ καὶ τῶν Ἀριστοτέλους, καὶ πάντες οἱ καθ’ ἑσάνον τῶν Πεισιπάτε, κυνικοί τε καὶ ἐπικύριοι, &c.

Et cap. 3. pag. 139. Ταῦτα μὲν ἐν καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα ἑσάνων εἰς ἀνασφάλαν καὶ περὶ τῶν χρησθέντων ὑποθέσεις, πλείων τις ἢ ἡ περὶ αὐτοῖς· ἀλλ’ ἐν ταύτῃ μοι δοκεῖ τῶν παρ’ ἡμῶν μὴ δεύσαι λόγον· ἀλλ’ ἡ πρὸ ὁμήρου ἀρεσάμενοι, ἀληθῶς λέγειν δύναντες καὶ ὑπὸ αὐτῶν περιεσφάμενοι ὡς ἂν ἐκ τῶν περὶ αὐτοῖς ὁμολογημένων, μαντεύειν ἐστὶν ἀληθῆ, καὶ συμβόλῃς θεοπραπτα τὰ δηληνία φασκόντων, καὶ ἀκριβῆ τῶν δηληνίων ὑποθέσεων κατὰ μαθημάτων.

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## The PREFACE

the Heathen Oracles, brought as evidences of the truth of that Religion; and proposing at first setting out to inquire, whether they were to be ascrib'd to good or to evil *Demons*, before he begins to prove the latter, says, " That another perhaps would " ascribe them to neither, but maintain " that they were nothing but mere Cheat " and Imposture. And then having shewn at large, upon what grounds this might be argu'd, he observes, " That one thing " which had lately been discover'd, might " much conduce to the confirmation of this " Opinion: For some of the Priests and other Persons, concern'd in the management of a Cheat carry'd on by Oracles, " had upon examination, confess'd and laid " open the whole Method and Contrivance " of it, and had suffer'd for it. From all which he concludes, " That one who had " collected these, and other things of the " like nature, might assert, that neither " Gods nor *Demons* were Authors of the " Oracles vented in their Cities, but that " they were purely the Impostures of designing Men: And, says he, whole Sects " of Philosophers have been of this Opinion. He names the *Peripateticks*, the *Cynicks*, and the *Epicureans*. But for his part he passes by all this. He owns that there was something supernatural in Oracles; and immediately betakes himself to prove

of the TRANSLATOR.

prove that they were deliver'd by Devils. He employs three whole Books of this Work to that purpose: And in his fifth Book *de Demonstratione Evangelicâ*, he recapitulates those Reasons and Authorities, which he had produc'd in these for his Opinion.

I have been the more particular in the Abstract of these two Passages, both because they are only referr'd to in the *Answer*, and but one of them has any account given of it there, and that but a very general one; and especially because little more seems needful to answer the Objection made from them, than to give the Reader a just view of what they contain.

It is from these Passages, that Mr. *Le Clerc* brings his most formidable Objection against the receiv'd Opinion concerning the Authors of the Heathen Oracles, which is maintain'd in this *Answer*. But Mr. *Vandale* <sup>k</sup> had before cited them at large, and that both in the Translation, and in the Original; and Mr. *de Fontenelle* had quoted them after him, in that <sup>l</sup> Chapter of his *History*, where, as the *Title* informs us, he proposeth to shew, *That the Primitive Christians themselves were not thoroughly per-*

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<sup>k</sup> De Orac. Vet. Ethnic. Diff. I. c. 2. p. 22, 36. & sequentibus.

<sup>l</sup> Hist. des Orac. Diff. I. c. 9. p. 116, 120.

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*fained, that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils.* There is therefore nothing new in this Objection: And as Mr. *Le Clerc* found it ready made to his hand in those *Authors*, in whose Defence he pretends to make it; so he might have found a sufficient Reply to it, in this *Answer*<sup>m</sup>, against which he writes, and spar'd his *Reader* and himself the needless trouble of this *Remark*.

But it seems neither of those *Authors* was able to make so good use of this Argument in their own behalf, not Mr. *Van-Dale* especially, from whom both the *History* and the *Bibliothèque* had it, as Mr. *Le Clerc* does for them: And as it was manag'd by them, neither the *Argument* nor the *Answer* to it were worth the notice of so great a Man; who tho' he cannot come up to the height of Mr. *Van-Dale's System*; to ascribe *all* the Heathen Oracles to nothing but the Artifice of their Priests; and pretends to take a middle way<sup>n</sup> between that new Opinion and the old one; which for the most part attributes them to Devils: Yet, as tho' that were only a mere Pretence, he makes a shift here even to out-go that *Author*, from whose own Argument, and that for an Opinion which Mr. *Le Clerc* declares against, he proves

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<sup>m</sup> Answ. p. 47, 99, 100, 101.

<sup>n</sup> Biblioth. Chois. ubi sup. p. 181, 271, 272.

of the TRANSLATOR.

more than Mr. *Van-Dale* himself, the *Author* of that Argument, and the *Patron* of that Opinion.

As to *Origen*, indeed Mr. *Van-Dale* ° thinks the Passage which he has quoted from him, an Evidence at least of his hesitating upon this Question: But as many whole Pages as he has transcrib'd out of *Eusebius*, he is so far from concluding from them, that that Father was of a different Opinion from the rest, concerning the Authors of the Heathen Oracles, much less that he was of his and Mr. *de Fontenelle*'s Opinion in this case; that all this long citation only causes him to wonder P, " That when *Eusebius* had produc'd such " good Arguments, to prove those Oracles " to be wholly owing to the Artifice of " Men, he yet continu'd in the common

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° De Orac. Vet. Ethnic. ubi sup. p. 21. Adeoq; de Oraculis per eos [Dæmonas] datis hæsitantèr admodum loquitur; ac, si non contrarium sentiat, ad minimum dubitare videtur.

° Id. ibid. p. 35. At mirandum magis est, *Eusebium*, qui multas ac solidissimas rationes affert, cur meritò credatur, Oracula fraude ac fallaciis hominum fuisse adornata, permansisse tamen in istà opinione, per malos Dæmones ea hominibus fuisse reddita. Et p. 41. At quem non maxima subeat admiratio, hunc ipsum *Eusebium*, qui talia profert, tamen cum cæteris patribus tenere ac defendere, Dæmonum arte ac fraude hujusmodi inventa ac reddita fuisse Oracula? Hoc enim non solum ex iis quæ fuerat præfatus (scopum scilicet ipsius esse disquirere, utrum bonorum ac [corrigere an] malorum Dæmonum opera sint) verùm & ex toto fere quarto ac quinto, cæterisque libris Præparationis Evangelicæ, atq; Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ, abundè pater.

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“Opinion, that they were deliver’d by  
 “Devils. And that he did continue in  
 “this Opinion, says he, does abundantly  
 “appear, not only from the design he  
 “proposes in this Disquisition; which is  
 “to enquire, Whether Oracles are the  
 “Work of good or evil *Demons*; but from  
 “almost all his fourth and fifth Books *de*  
 “*Preparatione Evangelicâ*, besides a great  
 “many Passages in the rest of that Work,  
 “and in his Ecclesiastical History.

Mr. *de Fontenelle* indeed carries the Argument something farther; and as he concludes from it against *Origen* <sup>a</sup> all that Mr. *Le Clerc* does; so he seems at last to conclude as much against *Eusebius* <sup>r</sup>; but ’tis after so much hesitation, and then express’d with that doubtfulness, that you may see he is venturing without his *Guide*, as well as out of his Depth. At first he owns <sup>f</sup>, “That tho’ *Eusebius* so well knew  
 “all that could hinder Men from belie-  
 “ving that there was any thing Superna-  
 “tural in Oracles, yet he ascrib’d them to  
 “Devils: And adds, that the Authority of  
 “a Person so well acquainted with both

<sup>a</sup> Hist. des Orac. ubi sup. p. 119, 120, 121.

<sup>r</sup> Id. ibid. p. 119.

<sup>f</sup> Ibid. p. 117. J’avoüe cependant, que quoy qu’*Eusebe* scût si bien tout ce qui pouvoit empêcher, qu’on les crût sur naturels, il n’a pas laissé de les attribuer aux Démon, & il semble que l’autorité d’un homme si bien instruit des raisons des deux partis est d’un grand préjugé pour le party qu’il embrasse.

“fides

of the TRANSLATOR.

“ sides of the Question, must be a great  
“ Encouragement to the side he takes.  
Then he observes <sup>t</sup>, “ That *Eusebius* had  
“ declar’d for this Opinion, without first  
“ overthrowing, or so much as weakning  
“ the Proofs, which he had brought against  
“ it. He tells him “ what sort of Oracle  
he should have produc’d to make it good;  
and at last will have him justifie himself,  
by pleading only his Humour for his O-  
pinion. Mr. *de Fontenelle* might well call  
this *poor reasoning*. But the *Answer* to his  
*History* tells him <sup>w</sup>, whose reasoning it is;  
not *Eusebius*’s, but his own. However,  
what it seems would have pleas’d Mr.  
*de Fontenelle* <sup>x</sup> much better, viz. “ That  
“ *Eusebius*, if those Times would not have  
“ born his asserting, that Oracles were not  
“ owing to *Demons*, should, in seeming to  
“ maintain that they were, have so ma-  
“ nag’d his Arguments, as to have artifici-  
“ ally insinuated the contrary: If that

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<sup>t</sup> Id. *ibid.* Mais remarquez, qu’Eusebe après avoir bien prouvé que les Oracles ont pu n’être que des impostures des Prêtres, assure, sans détruire ny affoiblir ces premières preuves, qu’ils ont pourtant été le plus souvent rendus par des Démon.

<sup>w</sup> Id. *ibid.* p. 118.

<sup>x</sup> *Ans.* p. 100.

<sup>y</sup> *Hist.* *ibid.* p. 118, 119. Ce seroit autre chose, si Eusebe, dans les Circonstances des temps où il s’est trouvé, n’avoit osé dire ouvertement, que les Oracles ne fussent pas l’ouvrage des Démon: Mais qu’en faisant semblant de le soutenir il eût insinué le contraire avec le plus d’adresse qu’il eût pu.

## The PREFACE

had not been poor reasoning too, it might have deserved a harder Name. I wish we had not too much grounds even from these *Remarks*, to suspect that Mr. *Le Clerc* likes such reasoning as well as Mr. *de Fontenelle*. But who would imagine after all this, that our *Historian* y should so much as “ Think, he  
“ sees clearly in the Passage cited from  
“ *Eusebius*, that that Father employ’d *Dé-*  
“ *mons* in delivering Oracles, only to ac-  
“ commodate himself to the Opinion of  
“ those, with whom he was disputing? It’s  
well he was not sure he saw this. That  
would have agreed still worse with all  
that he had been just saying against *Euse-*  
*bius*, for holding directly the contrary O-  
pinion to that, which it seems he at last  
saw he held, or at least thought so. This  
saying and unsaying is apt to make a Man  
suspect, that he knew not very well what  
to think of *Eusebius*’s Opinion in this  
matter.

But Mr. *Le Clerc* with very little hesi-  
tation, concludes against both these Fa-  
thers, from the Passages I have mention’d,  
“ \* That at the Bottom they were of the O-  
“ pinion of Mr. *Van-Dale* and Mr. *de Fon-*  
“ *tenelle*, concerning the Authors of the

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\* Hist. ibid. p. 119. Pour moy, je croy voir clairement,  
que dans l’endroit dont il est Question, il n’y a placé les *Dé-*  
*mons*, que par maniere d’acquit, & par un respect forcé  
qu’il a eu pour l’opinion commune,

\* Biblioth. ibid. p. 190, 201, 202. Locis mox citandis.

of the TRANSLATOR.

“Heathen Oracles; that *Eusebius* only copy’d from *Origen*, and that they speak of Oracles being deliver’d by Devils, not as their own Opinion, but as an Argument, *ad hominem*, and in compliance with the Heathens, against whom they were disputing, who had such a veneration for Oracles, that they would not so much as have heard any Proof of their being only human Impostures, which had nothing Supernatural in them. I say, he concludes this with very little hesitation; for tho’ at first for form’s sake he only *\*much fears this* of *Eusebius*, and seems to make some doubt of his words proving so much: Yet he afterwards refers *²* to them, and to what he had here argued from them, as a sufficient Answer to the charge of Novelty, against Mr. *Van-Dale’s System*: Whereas this had been no Answer to that at all, if *Eusebius* had not been hence concluded to have been of that Author’s Opinion before him. And this is a good Proof, that he concluded the same of *Origen*, because he supposes that *Eusebius* copy’d † from him: Besides that he produces *³* him as another instance against

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\* Id. *ibid.* p. 190, 192. Locis mox citandis.

² Id. *ibid.* p. 200. J’ajouteray que cette tradition n’est pas si constante, que l’on dit, comme il paroît par les paroles d’Eusebe, que j’ay déjà rapportées sur le chapitre 5.

† Id. *ibid.* p. 201. Loco mox citando.

³ Id. *ibid.* Ajoutons encore icy un passage d’Origene, &c.

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that Charge. So that his soft Expression<sup>b</sup> soon after, " That neither of these Fathers " would have look'd on the Opinion of " Mr. Van-Dale and Mr. de Fontenelle as " dangerous, or as any Contempt of the " Tradition of the Church, must mean " that they were both Patrons of that Opi- " nion, as he represents them all along<sup>c</sup>; and

<sup>b</sup> Biblioth. ibid. p. 201. *Immediately after the Citation out of Origen, Si on compare ces paroles avec celles d'Eusebe, on se persuadera facilement, que ce dernier les a imitées, & que ni l'un ni l'autre n'auroit regardé comme un mépris de la tradition des Peres, ou comme un sentiment dangereux, celui des Mrs. Van-dale & de Fontenelle. Et p. 192. Si ces paroles d'Eusebe ne suffisent pas pour en tirer cette conséquence, que quand il parle des Oracles comme veritablement rendus par des Démon, il s'accommode aux opinions des Payens; elles suffisent au moins pour disculper ceux, qui ont mieux aimé suivre la methode, qu'il a negligée. Il est visible, que ce sçavant homme n'auroit censuré, ni Mr. Van-Dale, ni Mr. de Fontenelle pour les livres qu'ils ont faits.*

<sup>c</sup> Id. ibid. p. 201, 202. *Where defending Mr. de Fontenelle against the charge of Novelty, he says, Il falloit au moins dire, qu'il a suivi, pour détruire les Oracles, une voie, qui avoit été indiquée par Origene & par Eusebe, comme une methode, dont on pouvoit bien se servir: quoy qu'ils ne l'eussent pas voulu employer, parce qu'ils croyoient convaincre plus facilement les Payens, en leur accordant qu'il y avoit quelque chose de surnaturel dans leurs Oracles. Et p. 218, 219. Mais je repondray pour luy — qu'Origene & Eusebe — croyoient qu'il étoit facile de montrer aux Payens, que les Oracles ne se rendoient, que par des fourberies humaines. Et p. 190. Mais je crains fort qu'Eusebe n'ait été dans le fonds dans un sentiment tout différent, que celui dont on le represente icy: c'est, qu'il n'ait été, avec Mrs. Van-Dale & de Fontenelle, que les Oracles Payens ne fussent de pures fourberies des hommes; & qu'il n'en ait parlé comme de réponses rendues par des Démon, seulement pour s'accommoder à Porphyre & aux autres admirateurs des Oracles, & disputer plus facilement contre eux.*

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and at last says positively <sup>d</sup> of *Eusebius*, that all he intended by proving that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, was only, on supposition that they were *Demons* which deliver'd them, that those were not good, but evil *Demons*. But since he is so full of his own Opinion in this Case, and cites <sup>e</sup> it upon every occasion, if *at the bottom* (as his Phrase is) he did not like that of these *Gentlemen* better, why did not he rather conclude, that these Fathers were of his Opinion than of theirs? Even that, as I have observ'd, had been more than what *Mr. Vande Dale*, from whom he borrows this Argument, was able to make of it. If he had had any esteem, either for the Authority of these Fathers, or for the Opinion which he calls his own, he must have taken this Method; which as it was certainly more to his purpose, so it was likewise much easier: For it had been no hard matter to conclude from these Citations, that both those *Fathers* would have sooner agreed with him, that there was a great deal of human Artifice and Deceit in Oracles, than with them, that there was nothing but Artifice and Deceit in them. The *Answer* <sup>f</sup> it self would have told him thus much: And there is no reason to doubt, but the wickedness of Men had

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<sup>d</sup> Id. *ibid.* p. 235. Eusebe n'a voulu prouver autre chose, si non que, si des Démonsoient rendus les Oracles, c'étoient des mauvais Démonsoient.

<sup>e</sup> *Biblioth. ibid.* p. 180, 272.

<sup>f</sup> *Answer*, p. 101, 148.

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its share in the business of Oracles. Sometimes the Devil wanted their help: For he was not always able to give true Answers; especially when, after the Birth of Christ, his Power was so far restrain'd, that his Oracles much declin'd in their Reputation, as *Strabo*, *Plutarch*, and other Heathen Authors cited in the *Answer* <sup>2</sup> assure us they did. And this is the very account there <sup>3</sup> given of several Oracles forg'd about that Time, and particularly of that here mention'd by *Eusebius*. There were also frequently discover'd designs of Men, to flatter and abuse Princes and others by the means of Oracles: And tho' it can by no good consequence be concluded from all this, that *all* Oracles were therefore human Imposture, and that there was nothing Diabolical or Supernatural in any of them; I am sure neither *Origen* nor *Eusebius* did ever make any such conclusion from hence as this, which is the Opinion of Mr. *Kandale* and Mr. *de Fontenelle*: Yet it may and must be hence concluded, and was even by those *Fathers*, and is own'd by the *Answer* <sup>4</sup>, that a great many Oracles were nothing but Cheats, which with a little Improvement, is the Opinion that Mr. *Le Clerc* calls his own. But whether it be his or no, I suppose 'tis only brought to amuse us; 'tis that of Mr. *Kandale* and Mr. *de Fontenelle*.

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<sup>2</sup> *Answer*. p. 181, 182.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* p. 153.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* p. 148.

which

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which is to be defended, and that rather than fail, by the *Fathers* who have writ most against it, and in those very places, where they maintain the contrary Opinion.

But that Fiction intimated with respect to Oracles in the Passage cited from *Origen*, might regard the truth of those wonderful things related concerning them, and not the manner of their delivery: And then it is impertinent to the purpose, for which Mr. *Le Clerc* brings it. However, when these *Fathers* were disputing with the *Heathens* against Oracles, produc'd as Evidences of the Divinity of their false Gods, and vindicating themselves and the rest of the Christians from the pretended Impiety of rejecting them; what was more natural than to alledge, that some even of their own *Philosophers* had despis'd Oracles as much as they, and been so far from thinking them Arguments of the truth of their Religion, that they believ'd there was nothing Supernatural in them? And why might not they do this without being of the Opinion of those *Philosophers*? Was that so catching, as to infect every one, who so much as mention'd it? But *Eusebius* insists much upon it; enlarges upon the several grounds, on which it was maintain'd; and instead of disproving the Argument, seems rather to favour it. And was it his business in that place to disprove it? He must be a very poor *Disputant*

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*tant*, who does not judge with *Eusebius*, that in this case it was more proper to make the best of any Argument, that had been us'd against Oracles; tho' it were only an Argument *ad hominem*, against which Mr. *Le Clerc* himself has nothing to say, if you'll permit him to chuse, upon which side of the Question it shall be. But besides, here was but too much truth in this Argument. There had been a great deal of Cheat and Imposture in the business of Oracles; and *Eusebius* here instances in a late discovery of one very signal Example of it. This might be justly pleaded in diminution of their Authority, and of the respect challeng'd from all Men towards them, especially when some of their own Philosophers had carry'd this Argument so much farther, as to conclude from it, that all Oracles were alike in this particular; and that there was nothing but Trick and Artifice in the best of them. And why might not these *Fathers* make use of the same Argument, though those *Philosophers* carry'd it too far? But Mr. *Le Clerc* pretends the *Fathers* carry'd it as far as they. Why? Because they tell us, That others would perhaps have insisted upon it in this Dispute; and *Eusebius* shews how some argu'd from it? But do they not both quit this Argument to pursue one of another nature, and inconsistent with that Opinion, which Mr. *Le Clerc* would ascribe

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to them, on account of this? And why must that be more an Argument *ad hominem*, than the other? That which they both professedly and at large insist on, than the other, which is but just mention'd by one of them, and postpon'd by them both? Besides, I think 'tis the Method of the best Disputants, where they use Arguments of a different force, to begin with those that are weaker, and to reserve those of most strength to the last. And that is the way these *Fathers* have taken in the Case before us. They were unwilling to omit any thing, that might be alledg'd to the disadvantage of Oracles, and therefore in the beginning of this Dispute they take notice of what others might say against them, even from the Opinion of their own *Philosophers*. This was only like skilful Warriours, to beat the Enemies out of their Hold: But they kept their chief Force for the Engagement, and to give the Adversary a final Overthrow: They made use for that purpose, not of other's Arguments but their own, such as they were able to stand by: And to give the last Blow to all the vain pretences of Oracles, they chose to prove by a great number of most undeniable Arguments, that they were for the most part deliver'd by Devils: Which *Origen* also asserts \* e-

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\* Orig. cont. Cels. L. 3. p. 132. Loco citato Hujus Respons. p. 110, 111.

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ven of one of those modern Oracles, from the pretended Imposture of which Mr. *de Fontenelle* † would argue all the rest to be mere Cheats. One would think these Arguments should at least, be as good an evidence of their Opinion, as the other. Mr. *Van-Dale* it seems thought them a better; and Mr. *Le Clerc* ought much rather to think so, both because it is not so much the interest of that Opinion he calls his, as of that of Mr. *Van-Dale*, to think otherwise; and especially because the nature of those Arguments is generally such, as by Mr. *Le Clerc*'s own Concession, ought sufficiently to imply the Opinion of him that uses them. By an Abridgment of those of *Eusebius* in the *Answer* <sup>k</sup>, we find he instances in such Oracles, as Mr. *Le Clerc* <sup>l</sup> makes no difficulty to ascribe to the Devil: And indeed if he do in earnest think, that any ought to be attributed to that impure and wicked Spirit, they must be such as these, which *Eusebius* asserts could come from no other Cause; and the Nature of the thing speaks it. Now to prove that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, by instancing in such as could come only from them, is an

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† Hist. Diff. i. c. 11. p. 138.

<sup>k</sup> Answ. p. 81, 82, &c.

<sup>l</sup> Biblioth. Chois. ubi sup. p. 234. Mais pour moy, je ne ferois pas de difficulté d'accorder à nôtre Auteur, que de semblables Oracles ont été quelquefois rendus par une inspiration particulière des Démon. Je ne trouve point mauvais, que l'on décharge la nature humaine de cet opprobre.

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undeniable Argument, not only of that Truth, but also of his believing it, who brings this Argument, if his instances are to the purpose; and he thinks them so. But Mr. *Le Clerc* seems quickly weary of that Concession <sup>m</sup>, so much tenderness he has for an Opinion, which he sometimes declares against. However, till he can shew us, that these Fathers were of the Opinion of those People, "That, he says, may perhaps be found, who think so hardly of Mankind; he must give us leave to conclude from their Arguments, that 'twas in *thesi*, not in *hypothesi*, they undertook to prove, that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils.

I have been longer upon this Argument than I intended, and yet I cannot leave it without taking notice of that strange liberty, which Mr. *Le Clerc* allows himself to take with the Fathers and Primitive Christians in these *Remarks*, as well as in most of his other Writings. Such as I am confident neither he, nor any Man living would think himself fairly dealt with, if any one should use towards him. He acknowledges <sup>n</sup> that the *Answer* <sup>o</sup> has prov'd by di-

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<sup>m</sup> Id. ib. Quoy qu'il y ait peut être des Gens, qui croiront que les hommes sont assez furieux d'eux mêmes, pour venir à de semblables extrémités, sans que les Démon s'en mêlent.

<sup>n</sup> Biblioth. Chois. ubi sup. p. 218. L'Auteur le fait voir, par des passages formels de Tertullien, de Lactance, de S. Cyprien, & de Minucius Felix, qui insultent les Payens la-dessus, & qui les défont d'exposer aux exorcismes d'un Chrétien leurs prétendus Prophetes.

<sup>o</sup> Answer. p. 72, 73, &c.

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rect citations out of *Tertullian*, *Lactantius*, *St. Cyprian* and *Minucius Felix*, that the Christians undertook publickly to dispossess the Priests and Priestesses, who deliver'd the Heathen Oracles, and to force their pretended Gods to confess themselves *Demons*. This is a direct and home Proof against all the Pretences concerning Oracles of the two *Authors*, he takes upon him to vindicate; and that is reason enough, why it shall be all nothing but counterfeit, whatever those Fathers, and all Men besides have hitherto thought of it: For in confutation of this Argument Mr. *Le Clerc* feigns to himself a kind of *Comedy*, as he calls it: <sup>p</sup> (for he is a pleasant Man, and loves a Farce, if he may chuse the Actors. He impos'd such another part upon *St. Augustin* <sup>q</sup>, and is very handsomely rebuk'd for it in the learned Defence <sup>r</sup> of that Father against his Animadversions) When this is done, he proves most demonstratively, because there have been Farces in the World, that therefore this was one. He reasons thus <sup>s</sup>: "There were ill Men in those  
" Times, and some of those ill Men pro-

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<sup>p</sup> Biblioth. ubi sup. p. 220. Ceux qui pouvoient réussir dans une semblable Comedie, &c.

<sup>q</sup> Animadversiones in S. Augustin. Oper. Tom. 5.

<sup>r</sup> Defensio S. Augustini adversus Joannis Phereponi in ejus opera Animadversiones, p. 118, 119.

<sup>s</sup> Biblioth. ibid. p. 219, &c.

## of the TRANSLATOR.

“ ~~call’d~~ themselves Christians; and there  
 “ were likewise credulous Men, say, and  
 “ credulous Christians too: And therefore  
 “ *Tertullian* and the rest of the Christian  
 “ Writers might be credulous enough to  
 “ believe Men, who said they had cast Do-  
 “ vils out of those that pretended to be  
 “ possess’d. He proves that this was re-  
 “ ally so, by the easiest Method in the World,  
 “ because it was possible it might have been so:  
 “ For what was barely possible, whenever he  
 “ pleases, shall actually have been, tho’ there  
 “ be not the least proof of it, and all the  
 “ probability imaginable against it. I should  
 “ tire my self as well as the Reader to in-  
 “ stance in all the *peut-être’s* this great  
 “ Master of Reason endeavours to put off  
 “ for Arguments in the compass of this one  
 “ Article. I shall content my self to refer to  
 “ a few of them in the Margin \*. But what  
 “ if his *peut-être* should be turn’d upon him-  
 “ self? There are in this Age many incre-  
 “ dulous, suspicious, and very Infidels, who  
 “ yet have not expressly renounc’d the name  
 “ of Christians: May we from hence argue,  
 “ that this Gentleman with his *peut-être’s*  
 “ is neither so honest nor so wise a Man, nor

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\* *Ibid.* p. 188. Il y a pu avoir de scuffiables im-  
 pofteurs dans les premiers, &c. Et p. 222. Peut-être aussi que  
 quelques uns d’entre eux s’en moquoient. Et p. 223. Peut-  
 être, comme je l’ai dit, — Peut-être aussi, &c. Et 227.  
 Il se pourroit néanmoins faire, &c. Et p. 266. L’infcripti-  
 on peut avoir été fait par des Impofteurs — *Tertullien* peut  
 avoir été trop credule, ou raifonner, &c.

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so good a Christian as he should be? And that therefore he suspects others without ground, and endeavours to make the Testimonies brought for our Religion from Antiquity to appear ridiculous? That he thereby affronts and provokes all wise and good Men, to ingratiate himself with the Infidel and Profane? And that he is well rewarded for these his *Comedies* with something besides a *Plaudite*? Is not this fair arguing in his own case, if it be in that of others? Is the *Comedian* *peut-être* more wise, more sincere, and more holy than the *Fathers* of the Church, the *Defenders* and *Propagators* of the Christian Religion? The result is, that the Priests and Priestesses who deliver'd Oracles, having conspir'd with certain no very good Christians, to impose upon *Tertullian*, and others as simple as he, that these might impose upon the World: The Plot of this *Comedy* was so well laid, and so cunningly carry'd on, that Mr. *Le Clerc* was the first that could unfold and discover it, when no Man besides ever knew or suspected any thing of it to this very Day. A Man apt to think so highly of himself, and of his own great Abilities, as Mr. *Le Clerc*, and so meanly of others, may believe all this upon a bare *perhaps* or two: But what<sup>u</sup> he

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<sup>u</sup> Biblioth. Choïfic. ibid. p. 262. Le mal est, que le fait n'est pas assez sûr, car, s'il suffit de lire une chose dans un Auteur pour la croire, il n'y aura rien qui ne devienne croyable.

says

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says in another case, and in opposition to a much better ground of belief, may with a little change be retorted upon him here: "The mischief is, that the Matter of Fact is not certain, for if it be sufficient that a thing might have been, to assert that it really was, there will be nothing but what may become credible.

In the winding up of this *Farce* he takes another occasion to insult the *Fathers*: For having endeavour'd to expose them for their credulity, and added this Sting <sup>v</sup>, to his other Reflections, "That they who are very credulous are never very wise; He produces as instances <sup>x</sup>, no doubt of both, *Justin Martyr*, *Irenaeus*, and *Tertullian* again, together with all that came after them, for asserting that a Statue of *Simon Magus* was erected in the Island of the *Tyber*; a mistake, as he pretends, which the former inconsiderately made, and the rest blindly copy'd after him. He had diverted himself with this but a little before <sup>y</sup>, and a Man would think it enough to have done that once in these short Remarks: But he is never weary of this *Topick* of *Reproach*, especially against the *Fathers*, and can no more write *Bibliothèques* or any thing else without it, than without commending and citing him-

<sup>v</sup> Ibid. p. 222. Mais les gens fort credules ne sont jamais fort pruden.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid. p. 222, 223.

<sup>y</sup> Ibid. p. 185.

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self. Now why was there no such Statue erected? Because there was in the same Island a Statue of *Semo Sangus*. What then, was the Island so little, that there was not room enough in it for two Statues? Those of *Semo* were in divers parts of *Italy*, and he is mention'd both by *Lactantius*<sup>a</sup> and *St. Augustin*<sup>a</sup>, who likewise mention<sup>b</sup> this Statue of *Simon Magus*, and therefore they were not impos'd upon by a similitude of Names. But how came the Heathens to take no notice of this mistake, which, as he owns<sup>c</sup>, gave them so fair a handle to expose and ridicule the Christians? In one place<sup>d</sup> he tells us they did take notice of it, and "that it was deservedly laugh'd at by them. But here he says<sup>e</sup> quite the contrary, "That "at least nothing of that nature is come "down to us." And indeed it is incredible, that none of those *Fathers* who have mention'd this Fact since *Justin Martyr*,

<sup>a</sup> Divin. Instit. L. 1. c. 15.

<sup>b</sup> De Civit. Dei. L. 18. c. 19.

<sup>c</sup> Divin. Instit. L. Aug. de Hær. p. 8.

<sup>d</sup> Biblioth. Choisie, ubi supra, p. 223. Cependant les Romains auroient eu là une belle occasion de couvrir de confusion ceux, qui leur faisoient de semblables reproches; en les convaincant d'ignorance, & de témérité.

<sup>e</sup> Animadvers. in S. Aug. op. T. 8. Mirum est fabulam deposita a Romanis Statuâ tam turpem & tam manifestam, quæ proinde merito ab Ethnicis ridebatur, usq; adeo veteribus placuisse, ut uno ore illam affirmaverint, prout citatur, Defens. S. Aug. p. 177.

<sup>f</sup> Bib. ibid. Il n'est rien venu jusqu'à nous de semblable du côté des Payens.

should

of the TRANSLATOR.

should have heard of any Objection that the Heathens had made to the truth of it, if they had made any; much less, if it had been exploded as a notorious mistake; and less, yet, if they had only copy'd it from him. But Mr. *Le Clerc* does not only assert, That we read no where of any notice the Heathens took of this pretended mistake, but he undertakes to account for this by his old Method of *Peut-être's*. “Parhaps<sup>f</sup>, (says he, and it seems he had said so before) they did not read the Books of the Christians, either thro' Contempt or Neglect. What, not tho' immediately address'd to them, as this of *Justin Martyr* was to the *Emperors* and the *Senate*, and the *People of Rome*? And is it not evident even from what Mr. *Le Clerc* has quoted<sup>g</sup> above out of *Origen* and *Eusebius*, that both *Celsus* and *Porphry* had read the Writings of the Christians? Yet this is plainer still from all the rest of the Dispute, which those Fathers carry on against these Philosophers: The same is as evident of *Julian*, from what *Gregory Nazianzen*<sup>h</sup> and *St. Cyril*<sup>i</sup> write against him. But Mr. *Le*

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<sup>f</sup> Ibid. *Peut-être* comme je l'ay dit ne lisoient ils pas les livres des Chrétiens, ou par mépris, ou par négligence.

<sup>g</sup> Ibid. p. 191, 192, 200, &c.

<sup>h</sup> Orat. adv. Julian.

<sup>i</sup> St. Cyril. contr. Julian.

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*Clerc* has another *peut-être* \* to help him out. " Perhaps also, says he, the Christi-  
 " ans were often and severely mortify'd by  
 " the Heathens on this occasion, and no  
 " account of it has been transmitted to us.  
 Was it the Fathers then, and the Primitive  
 Christians, who to conceal their Shame,  
 took care to intercept all notice of it? And  
 why were they so forward to publish the  
 Mistake? Could they hope their Reproach  
 would be conceal'd, while they propagated  
 the Error, which was the occasion of it?  
 So much probability there is in the Con-  
 jectures of this great *Critick*. But the learn-  
 ed Mr. *de Tellemons* <sup>1</sup> has so fully vindica-  
 ted *Justin Martyr* and the other *Fathers* in  
 this particular; and after him the no less  
 learned *Vindicator* <sup>m</sup> of St. *Augustin* against  
 the insolent *Animadversions* of this perpe-  
 tual *Writer*, that if he had had any Mode-  
 sty he would have troubled the World no  
 more with this Cavil against the *Fathers*,  
 till he had first answer'd those *Authors*;  
 and then we might have been sure to have  
 heard no more from him upon this Subject;

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\* *Biblioth. ibid.* Peut-être aussi que ces vanteurs indiscrets  
 de Miracles ont souvent eu de rudes mortifications de la part  
 des Payens, des quelles l'histoire n'a pas été transmise à la  
 postérité.

<sup>1</sup> *Memoires pour servir a l'Histoire Ecclesiastique des six  
 premiers siecles.* Tom. 2. P. 1. p. 340, &c.

<sup>m</sup> *Defensio S. Augustini.* p. 176, &c.

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which tho' it be an Objection wherein he is not singular, yet neither of those great Men whom he quotes <sup>a</sup> for it, nor any other Writer except himself, ever us'd it in that insulting manner, as if only to alledge, that *Justin Martyr* and others were so weak as to affirm, that a Statue of *Simon Magus* was set up, were enough upon every occasion to lay aside the Authority of the *Fathers* in any case. *Grotius* <sup>o</sup> affirms the same thing upon their Authority. Would Mr. *Le Clerc* then approve of this Method to expose that great Man? But the *Fathers* are to be run down by any means, to make way for the designs of some Men: And if a just Indignation and Resentment to see those great *Bulwarks* of Christianity thus insulted, and our holy Religion undermin'd and betray'd by one, who has rais'd himself to a Reputation with the Irreligious and Profane, only by his much and loose Writing: If this have carry'd me a great way farther, than what I first design'd, I ought rather to beg pardon of the Reader, than of Mr. *Le Clerc*.

I shall leave the farther consideration of these *Remarks* to the learned *Author* of this *Answer*, against whom they are writ, who if he be still alive, and think any thing in them

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<sup>a</sup> Biblioth. ibid. p. 185.

<sup>o</sup> Grot. Append. ad Comment. de Antichristo.

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worth a *Reply*, will in all likelihood make one, if he have not done it already; especially since he <sup>p</sup> has made us hope for something more from him upon this Subject. However, if any farther *Answer* can be thought due to *Remarks* published in such a manner, and after so many protestations <sup>2</sup> against engaging in the Controversy, or taking any notice of what Reflections may be made upon them; I may possibly one Day undertake it, as I now did this *Translation*, only to supply the defect of some abler Pen: And I will not doubt of the success even of so poor an Advocate, in a Cause which pleads so well for its self.

But before I shut up this long *Preface*, I think my self oblig'd to take notice, that the learned *Author*, in prosecution of his Argument, has made some unjust Reflections upon the *Protestants* <sup>1</sup>, as if they were enemies to all Miracles, and it were the interest of their Religion to deny every thing that has the least pretence to be supernatural. If he means by *Protestants* only *Anabaptists*, because he tells us Mr. *Van-Dale* <sup>2</sup>, who gave occasion to the Reflection, is of that *Set*, I am not concern'd in what he says. And there are a great many other

<sup>p</sup> Pref. to the Answ. p. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Biblioth. ibid. p. 179, 180, 181, 182.

<sup>2</sup> Answ. p. 14, 82.

<sup>3</sup> Id. Pref. p. 7. Answ. p. 14.

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*Sectaries*, who call themselves *Protestants*, whose Vindication I do not think my self oblig'd to undertake: But as to the *Protestants* of the Church of England, I must take leave to assure my *Author*, that they are as good Friends to Miracles as himself, and he need only look into their Writings to be convinc'd of it. Mr. *de Fontenelle* \* tells us what pains the great Men of this, and we may add of the last Age, have taken to establish Christianity upon its true Foundations: And I may truly say, none have labour'd more or with more success in this Cause than the *Protestants*, yet I can challenge my *Author* to instance even in one of them, that has omitted the Argument from Miracles. Indeed there is no possibility of proving the Truth of any Religion without it, that is, of proving that it comes from God: For Miracles are the credentials of God's Ambassadors, which publish their Divine Character and Commission to the World: And I cannot better shew the Suitableness and Efficacy of them to prove a Divine Revelation, than in the Words of a most excellent and very late *Apologist* † of our own: In which all the *Protestants*, at least of our

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\* *Hist. des Orac.* p. 6.

† *Mr. Jenkin's Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion*, Vol. I. c. 2. p. 26.

Church,

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*Church*, perfectly agreeing with him, this will be at the same time an evidence of their opinion in this Matter. His Words are these: "It is an extravagant thing to conceive, that God should exclude himself from the Works of his own Creation; or, that he should establish them upon such inviolable Laws, as not to alter them upon some occasions, when he foresaw it would be requisite to do it: For, unless the course of Nature had been thus alterable, it would have been defective in regard to one great End, for which it was design'd, viz. it would have fail'd of being serviceable to the designs of Providence upon such occasions. The same infinite Wisdom, which contriv'd the Laws for the order and course of Nature, contriv'd them so, as to make them alterable, when it would be necessary for God, by suspending the Powers, or interrupting the course of Nature, to manifest his extraordinary Will and Power; and by the same Decree, by which he at first establish'd them, he subjected them to such alterations, as his Wisdom foresaw would be necessary. Thus far this incomparable Author. To which I might add a whole Treatise of another excellent Writer \* also of our own Church in

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\* *Miracles Works above and contrary to Nature.*

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defence of the Truth and Authority of Miracles against *Spinoza, Hobbes, &c.* with the Earl of *Clarendon*, Bishop *Parker*, *Templer*, and all the rest who have writ against *Hobbes*. And *Dr. Bentley's* Sermons at *Mr. Boyle's* Lecture, and all that have been preach'd on that occasion since. But it were endless to name all the *Protestants*, who have insisted on this Argument: Those I have mention'd may suffice to shew, that we of the Church of *England* are so far from being enemies to Miracles, that we look upon them as a necessary evidence of the Truth of our holy Religion. Accordingly we acknowledg all the Miracles recorded in Holy Scripture, those of *Moses* and the Prophets, and those of *Christ* and his *Apostles*; and likewise all those wrought in the first Ages of the Church for the Confirmation and Establishment of the Christian Religion, and among them that of the *Heathen Oracles* being put to silence, and the *Devils* who deliver'd them, cast out by the Power of *Christ*, which is the very Miracle here in question. And tho' we do not extend the duration of this Power of Miracles beyond the Reason and Design of it, which was to assist the propagation and establishment of Christianity by bearing witness to its Truth: And therefore do own that this Power has ceas'd, since that Truth was sufficiently attested in  
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all parts of the World: Yet we do not deny, that in cases extraordinary it may please God still to manifest a miraculous Power. Indeed we acknowledge no such constant standing Power in the Church, because there is now no further occasion for it: And much less do we own the pretence of the *Church of Rome* to this Power, and that number of false Miracles, which she grounds upon this pretence. But to represent the *Protestants* as enemies to Miracles, because they reject all the forgeries of that Church, is the same injustice as it would be to charge them with disbelieving *History*, because they give no credit to any of her *Legends*. It is not our Church that discredits these evidences of the Truth of the Christian Religion, but their's, that undermines and betrays that Religion, by putting their false Miracles on the same foot with those true ones: Like what she does in another instance, when, in defence of her darling Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, she calls it a Mystery, and compares it with that of the ever Blessed *Trinity*, which some of her Writers have had the boldness to pretend is as much a contradiction as *Transubstantiation*: In both cases betraying that fondness for those Corruptions she has introduc'd into Christ's Church, as for their Maintenance and Preservation to sap the very Foundations of the Christian Religion, and hazard the  
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the overthrow of the Church itself. But I will not suspect that this learned *Author* ever design'd to carry things thus far. As he was of the Communion of the *Church of Rome*, and was writing against the *System* of one who calls himself a *Protestant*, which is a *Heretick* in the Language of that Church, he might think himself oblig'd for form-sake, as to appropriate the words *Church* and *Catholic* to those of his own, and consequently that of *Heretick* to all of a different Communion (which is the usual Style of all Popish Writers) so likewise not to omit so fair an opportunity of casting a Reflection or two upon such declar'd enemies to his Church: In which I am the more willing to believe he may have rather express'd the sense of his Party, than his own, because he himself cites *a Protestant* for a different Opinion to that, which he charges here upon their whole Body.

And now it may be expected I shall give some account of what I have done in this Translation, and that I shall do in a few Words. As to the Version it self I can say nothing more for it, than that it is faithful. It is so far from running into the Extreme of a *Paraphrase*, that I wish it do not sometimes rather too verbally express the Original. I endeavour'd to avoid both

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extremes as much as I could, but I cannot say I have always done it; however the Reader will be so much the surer to have the Author's true Sense, which is that for which I was most concern'd. But what this wants of the Beauty of the *Original*, (and I am sensible it wants a great deal) I have in some measure made up in adding to the usefulness of it, both by a more particular Direction to all the Citations in it, and by making the *Index* at least as large again. In order to the former I compar'd all the Quotations with the Originals, except a very few for want of the Books; and I must do the learned *Author* the justice to say I found them transcrib'd, the most part of them with very great exactness, and the rest without any material variation. The References indeed were so very general, so adapted to Readers of the *Author's* own high-form of Learning, that they could not but occasion a great deal of trouble to one no better acquainted with those Books than I. But a Man of Mr. Le Clerc's universal reading should not have been so easily discourag'd at this, as to despair of finding a Citation<sup>2</sup>, because the very Page was not refer'd to. However tho' there was no difficulty in that only Instance which he is pleas'd to alledg,

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<sup>2</sup> Biblioth. Chois. ubi sup. p. 237.

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yet I found a great deal in many others, and that often increas'd by the Fault of the Printer. Therefore to free others from the pains which I have been oblig'd to take, I have paged all the Author's Citations, where there was the least occasion for it, except two or three which I had not opportunity to examine, and I have added a Catalogue of the several Authors, and their Editions referr'd to in this Answer, and in the Prefaces.

And now it is high time for me to ask the Reader's Pardon for having detain'd him too long from the Book it self.

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THE

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THE  
PREFACE  
OF THE  
AUTHOR.

**I**T is certain the Establishment of the Christian Religion, which was so wonderful in all its Circumstances, was not effected without a great number of extraordinary Miracles, by which God did evidently shew, that he was the Author of it. The Words of our Saviour, who expressly promises <sup>a</sup> those, that shall believe in him, the Power of working Miracles, and even greater <sup>b</sup> than his: The Testimony of the sacred Pen-men, <sup>c</sup> and of the most antient Fathers <sup>d</sup> of the Church, who relate these Miracles, of which they

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<sup>a</sup> Mar. xvi. 17.

<sup>b</sup> Joh. xiv. 12.

<sup>c</sup> Act. iii. 2, &c. Ch. v. 15, 16. 1 Cor. ch. xii. & xiii. & xiv.

<sup>d</sup> Origen. adv. Celsum. Justin. Cyprian. & alii passim: sed principue Irenæus Lib. 2. adv. Hæres. cap. 57.

## The PREFACE

were often Eye-witnesses: And lastly the impossibility, that Christianity could have been establish'd without this help, in so suddain and universal a manner, in spite of so many Obstacles insuperable to all human Force: All this, I say, puts it beyond all doubt, that from the first Ages God thus declar'd himself in favour of the Christian Religion.

But among all these Miracles, that accompany'd the Establishment of Christianity upon the Ruins of Idolatry, there was none more illustrious and more astonishing to the Heathens, than the Silence of their Oracles. As they had nothing in their false Religion more wonderful, nor in appearance more divine than these Oracles; nothing more magnificent, nor more famous, than the Temples, where they were settled; nothing more surprizing, than the Cures receiv'd there in Dreams, and the Predictions of their Prophets, who appear'd in those places inspir'd by their false Deities: So neither did any thing cause them more Astonishment, than their perceiving, that, as Christ was acknowledg'd and ador'd in the World, all these pretended Miracles did every where proportionably cease; that their *Æsculapius* \* did no longer heal the

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\* Porphyrius apud Euseb. Lib. v. Præp. Evang. cap. i. p. 181, & 182.

Sick, who slept in his Temple; that the Priests of their *Apollo* did no longer foretel things to come; and that all their Deities gave no longer, as formerly, sensible Tokens of their presence.

Many among them acknowledg'd the Finger of God in this Event, <sup>f</sup> and the Power of Christ over their Idols, which they abandon'd to embrace Christianity. Others, more hardened, ascrib'd this Silence, not to the Power of Christ over their false Gods, but to the abhorrence, <sup>g</sup> these Gods had of his Name, and the Indignation which they conceiv'd, to see him ador'd by Men. Others <sup>h</sup> imputed it to their Sins: Asserted, that they had offended their Gods, and for that reason were abandon'd by them, and the Christians suffer'd to prevail over them. In fine the Philosophers, <sup>i</sup> searching with impatience after the Cause of an Effect so surprizing, ascrib'd it sometimes to the failure of those Exhalations, by means of which, according to them, the Gods communicated their prophetick Inspiration to Men; and sometimes to the Death

<sup>f</sup> Tertul. in Apolog. Irenæus loco citato. Greg. Nyss. in vitâ S. Greg. Neocæs. p. 548, &c.

<sup>g</sup> Arnob. L. i. adv. Gentes. p. 27. Theodoriti L. iii. Hist. Eccl. c. 3. Lactant. L. iv. Instit. c. 27. Greg. Nazianz. Orat. i. adv. Julian. Porphy. loco citat.

<sup>h</sup> August. L. i. de Consensu Evang.

<sup>i</sup> Plutarch Lib. de Defect. Orac. Julian. apud Cyrillum l. 6.

## The PREFACE

of those Spirits, which they thought fit to own for the Authors of Oracles, when by their Silence they saw plainly, they could no longer ascribe them to their Gods, without owning their Weakness at the same time.

All these miserable shifts only serv'd to place the Truth in a better Light, and to set off the Power of Christ with more Lustre. It was evident, that Oracles had ceas'd from the time of his Birth, and the publication of his Gospel; and it was no less evident, that this surprizing Effect came not from any of those Causes, which the Heathens alledg'd, but from the sole Power of our Saviour's Divinity over those Devils, who, under the Name of the false Gods of the Heathens, had till then deceiv'd Mankind by their Illusions and Impostures.

This is what the Primitive Christians demonstrated to the Heathen by the most sensible and convincing Proofs: For by the Invocation of the Name of Christ, \* and the Sign of his Passion they forc'd the Devils to own, that they were the Authors of Oracles, and of all the pretended Miracles that accompany'd them. They oblig'd them to

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\* Tertull. in Apolog. Cyprian. Lib. de Vanitat. Idol. Minutius Felix in Octav. Athanas. Lib. de Incarn. Verbi Dei. Lactant. & alii infra producendi.

declare their Cheat and Imposture in the presence of their Worshippers. In fine they drove them out of their Temples, where they vended their Delusions, and out of the false Prophets, by whom they gave their Answers, with so absolute an Authority, and so astonishing a Success, as I believe nothing can be found more wonderful and miraculous in all Christian Antiquity. This was the Cause of the Silence of Oracles; an Event so remarkable, that it was almost one continu'd Miracle, during the first Ages of the Church, and an evident Proof of the Truth of the Christian Religion.

Accordingly the Fathers,\* who in their Works have defended this Religion against Idolatry, do always object to the Heathens<sup>1</sup> this miraculous Event, as a most sensible Argument, and most capable to convince, or at least to Silence them. They continually represent to them the Condition, in which their Oracles then were, and the Power the Christians had, to put a stop to the Illusions of them, and to drive their

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<sup>1</sup> Clemens Alexand. in Protept. Achanas. Lib. de Incarn. Verbi Dei. Hieronym. in Jesaiam. Gregor. Nazianz. Orat. in Sancta Lumina. Theodoret. Lib. de Cur. Græc. Affect. Serm. 10. de Orac. Euseb. L. v. de Præp. Evang. cap. 1, 16, 17, & L. v. de Dem. Evang. sub init. p. 204. Tertull. in Apolog. Lactant. Instit. L. iv. c. 27. Cyrillus L. vi. contr. Julian. August. L. i. de Consensu Evang. Cyprian. Minutius Felix, &c.

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pretended Deities out of them. They challenge them still to put the matter upon this Tryal; to bring any one of those false Prophets, that pass'd for inspir'd, to their Tribunals; and to be witnesses themselves, in what manner the Christians would cast the Devil out of him, and put their Prophet to silence. Lastly they speak to them on this Subject with a Confidence, that shews how sure they were of the Truth they advanc'd; and that their Adversaries were not able to Answer it. Such were the Advantages, that in the first Ages the Defenders of the Christian Religion drew from the miraculous Silence of Oracles, to confound Idolatry, and maintain the Truth of Christianity.

Since that time, and the total Extinction of Paganism, this Miracle has not been less famous or remarkable. All Christendom has been acquainted with it; and there are few Authors that have writ of Religion, but who have spoken of it: and tho' many of the Moderns have been mistaken, as to the time and manner of this miraculous Event, yet most have produc'd it, as a Proof of the Truth of our Religion; and none have ever disagreed about the Two Chief Points, on which this Fact is establish'd. *1<sup>st</sup>*, That the Oracles of the Heathen Religion were wholly, or at least in part, the work of Devils. *2<sup>dly</sup>*, That they were

were put to Silence by the Power of Jesus Christ.

This was the general Opinion of the Christians, founded on the Authority of the Fathers, and of all the Ecclesiastical Writers, not one excepted, when Mr. *Van-Dale*, an Anabaptist Physician of *Haerlem*, enter'd the Lists, <sup>m</sup> and undertook to shew, that all the World had been, and was still in a Mistake, as to these two Points: That its false and ridiculous to believe, that Devils concern'd themselves with the Heathen Oracles: That there was nothing in all the Miracles related of them, but the pure Imposture of idolatrous Priests: That it is equally false, that Oracles were silenc'd at the Birth of our Saviour, or that there was any thing extraordinary in their Silence, which ought to be ascrib'd to his Power: That in reality they only ceas'd, because the Temples, where they were establish'd, were ruin'd by those Edicts, which the Christian Emperors publish'd against the Pagan Religion.

One would imagine, that this Author had the strongest and most convincing Reasons in the World to produce, in order to maintain a Paradox so new, so contrary to the Tradition of all Ages, and so opposite to the universal Opinion of Christianity.

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<sup>m</sup> *Van-Dale Lib. de Oraculis Vet. Ethnicorum.*

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But after all, what is there else to be found in his Book, besides a great deal of Reading, very much confus'd, and very ill digested, without either Proof or Authority; a great number of frivolous Conjectures throughout, and of false suppositions, on which he has built his whole System?

A Book of this Character ought not in reason to be any great Prejudice to so constant and authoriz'd a Tradition, as that before us; nor to make any considerable Impression upon the judicious Reader, who does not suffer himself to be dazzled by a vain Parade of Learning, but requires something more in a Book, than passages of Greek and Latin confusedly heap'd upon one another. But in this Age one may be sure, a new Opinion, however ill prov'd, will not fail to gain its Followers, provided it favours the inclination Men have to Incredulity; undertakes to discharge them of that uneasy load, which the belief of Miracles imposes, and endeavours to lessen any of the Proofs or Traditions of Religion.

It is therefore no wonder, Mr. *Van-Dale's* Book has found many, that have given it a favourable Reception, and have gone into the System, which he endeavours to erect. The inclination of their Heart has, no doubt, on this occasion, overcome the force of their Judgment: For indeed, if Mr. *Jaquelot* had

had follow'd his own Reason, he would not have adopted the false Suppositions, on which Mr. *Van-Dale* builds the first part of his System. To prove, as Mr. *Van-Dale* does, that Devils could not be the Authors of Oracles, he would not have produc'd this Principle, That none but God, who is the Sovereign Master of Time, can know and foretel what is to come. As if, in maintaining with all Christian Antiquity, that Oracles were the Work of Devils, it were necessary to allow those evil Spirits that certain Knowledge of Futurity, which belongs to God alone. Nor would Mr. *Mæbius*, Professor at *Leipswick*, who has answer'd Mr. *Van-Dale*, have granted to him, that Oracles did not cease at our Saviour's Birth, as Mr. *De Fontenelle* <sup>o</sup> says, he has. What had been more easy, than to shew the ambiguity, of which the Anabaptist Author makes such ill Use, and the Injustice he does the Fathers, in charging them with teaching, That Oracles ceas'd all at once, in all parts of the World, at the very Moment of our Saviour's Birth? Nor would Mr. *Bayle* <sup>p</sup> have pretended to confirm the

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<sup>a</sup> Quatrieme Dissertation sur l'existence de Dieu, c. 8. p. 657.

<sup>o</sup> Mr. De Fontenelle's Preface to his *Histoire des Oracles*, of the Amsterdam Edition 1701. which is that, I use throughout this Answer.

<sup>p</sup> Dictionnaire Critique, at the word *Amphilochus*. N. A. p. 209.

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same Author's Opinion, by telling us of Oracles, that subsisted after the Establishment of the Christian Religion. He would easily have found, in consulting the Fathers, that these new Proofs, he alledges, fall short of his purpose, and make nothing against the true Opinion.

But all these Gentlemen had, without doubt, their Reasons for not examining Mr. *Van-Dale's* Book so closely. Mr. *De Fontenelle* had quite contrary Reasons; and yet 'tis He, who has done Mr. *Van-Dale* the most Honour, of them all. He has not only commended his Book, as a Work full of Force and Learning, but has adopted it almost all for his own. He has made an exact Abridgment of it in French, has enrich'd it with a great many new Proofs, and new Reflections, and has lent it all the Ornaments he could, to make it easy and agreeable to the Reader. This consideration made me resolve to attack Mr. *De Fontenelle's* Book only, in order to refute this Paradox, since he defends it in a better and more close manner than Mr. *Van-Dale*. But as I have a very great respect for Mr. *De Fontenelle*, I have endeavour'd to answer him with all the regard due to a Person of his Merit; and I chose rather, that my Answer should lose something of the Strength and Agreeableness, I might have given it, than any way to incur his displeasure,

pleasure, by adding more Life and Force to it. Thus as I have answer'd him without the least Sharpness, I am ready with the same Temper to receive his Answer. This is very near the same disposition, in which one of the Ancients \* says, he always was, according to the Principles of his Philosophy; and I think 'tis that, in which a Christian ought to be, after a manner incomparably more perfect, according to the Maxims of Christianity; particularly when he has no other design, but that of sincerely inquiring after the Truth.

If I have not enlarg'd upon some incident Matters, as much as I could have done, 'tis because I was afraid of wandring too far from my principal end. But I may return to this Subject another time, and more thoroughly examine the pretended Platonism of the Fathers, by the help of which some would make the greatest, and most holy Mysteries of our Religion, pass for the Ideas and Opinions of a Heathen Philosopher. This will lead me to the explanation of some passages of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, which may have given Mr. *De Fontenelle* occasion to assert, That the Primitive Christians look'd upon *Plato* as a kind of Prophet, who had foreshewn several important Points of Christianity, especially

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\* Cicero. L. 2. Tuscul. Quæst.

the Holy Trinity : And we shall find, that this ancient Christian Author was far from believing, that *Plato* was a kind of Prophet ; and that neither he, nor any other of the Fathers, did ever look otherwise on this Philosopher, than as a Plagiary, and Corrupter of the Prophets.

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AN  
ANSWER  
TO THE

*History of Oracles,*

Address'd to the

AUTHOR:

The First PART.

In which the false Reasons ascrib'd  
to the Fathers, and to the Primitive  
Christians, are confuted; and the true  
ones related, which persuaded them,  
that the Heathen Oracles were deliver'd  
by Devils:

SIR,

I Have read your History of Oracles, in which  
you have given us an Abridgment of the  
Treatise that Mr. Van-Dale has written  
upon that Subject. This Author has not  
been altogether satisfy'd with the manner, in  
which you have perform'd that Work. He

CHAP. I.

*The Reasons  
which ought to  
have hinder'd  
the Author of  
the History of  
Oracles from  
adopting  
Mr. Van-Dale's  
System.*

has \* complain'd, that you have omitted some things of Importance, which might have been more decisive, and less disagreeable than others, which you have put in. But he was in the wrong to complain. Far from having in any thing diminish'd the force of his Book, 'tis beyond contradiction, that you have made it much more methodical and agreeable. You have taken out of it that great confusion, which runs quite through it, and confounds the most attentive Reader, who is lost every Moment in a Labyrinth of Digressions, Parentheses, and useless Citations heap'd upon one another. But whatever he may say, the things which you have judiciously left out, are such as might well be omitted. You easily found they were false and injurious to Religion. You knew the Author, you undertook to Copy, was an Anabaptist Physician, hard of belief by Profession, and who passes even among his own Party for a Man of ill Opinions, as he himself complains in one of his Books <sup>b</sup>. Besides, you were not ignorant, how much all the Protestants \*, of whatever Sect they be, are Enemies to Miracles, especially to that wonderful Power of casting out Devils, which the Catholick Church receiv'd from Christ, and has exercis'd through all Ages in so remarkable a manner. You know what Interest they have to laugh at these things, and to treat all these supernatural Effects as Impositions and Cheats.

Considering this, I do not wonder you have

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\* *Mr. Van Dale's Letter written to a Friend, and inserted in the Republique des Lettres, for the Month of May 1687. Art. I. p. 450.*

<sup>b</sup> *In the Epistle Dedicatory of his Book, De Origine & Progressu Idololatriæ.*

\* *See the Protestants vindicated from this unjust Accusation, in the Preface of the Translator.*

left out a great deal of Mr. *Van-Dale's* Treatise ; but what surprizes me is, that you have adopted the greatest part of it, and employ'd all your Reason and Wit, to make good his Opinion, and to maintain the boldness of his Paradox. Permit me, Sir, to undertake to confute it, and to do it with more Method, I make use of your Book. If I can answer that satisfactorily, that of your Author, which is much less capable of producing ill Effects, will be no longer in a condition to do hurt. Yet if it be necessary to refute him in the Language he writes, I shall not refuse to do it, and I hope I shall not have much difficulty in doing of it.

You divide your Book into two Parts. In the first you attempt to shew, that Oracles were not deliver'd by Devils. In the second, that they did not cease at the Birth of Christ. I will endeavour to answer both in a few words, and to maintain the two contrary Truths, which you have undertaken to overthrow, and which are of so much importance to Religion.

*The Division of his Book, and what he pretends to maintain therein.*

I begin with your former Dissertation, in CHAP. II. which you pretend to prove, that all the famous Oracles of Antiquity, so much respected through all the Heathen World ; and so often produc'd

*The State of the Question.*

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\* *The whole Theology of the Heathens, according to Eusebius, was divided into Historical, Philosophical, and Civil. The Historical contain'd what the Poets, who were the first and most ancient Divines of the Heathens, had related concerning the Gods : The Philosophical, what the Philosophers had taught concerning them, resolving, as much as they could, the Fables of the Poets, by Interpretations and Allegories : The Civil compriz'd what the Laws had enjoyn'd concerning the Worship Men were oblig'd to pay to the Gods in Cities and Provinces. The Heathens left Men at liberty to believe what they would of the Two former ; but for the Third, which particularly regarded Oracles, they could not*

produc'd by the Heathens<sup>d</sup>, as a manifest proof of the Divinity of their false Religion, were nothing but the Cheats and gross Impostures of

not endure the least Attempt should be made against it; because they believ'd all that was in them was manifestly Supernatural and Divine; and that none could doubt of it without a Rashness and Impiety, that deserv'd Punishment. See how Eusebius speaks of it. Καιρός ἂν εἴη τὸ τεῖτον ἐπὶ τῷ παρόντι δι-  
ωθῆναι, οὗτο δὲ ἐστὶ τὸ χεῖρον καὶ χείρον σωματικόν, πολι-  
τικὸν αὐτοῖς περισσολοβώμενον. ὃ καὶ μάλιστα πρὸς τὴν νόμων  
διεκδικεῖν, ὡς ἂν παλαιὸν ὁμῶς καὶ πάτερον καὶ τὸ θεολο-  
γικῶν δυνάμει αὐτόθεν ἢ ἀρετῶν ὑποφαίνον· διαλεβήλ-  
λην γὰρ αὐτοῖς μαντεῖα καὶ χρησμοί, θεραπείαι τε καὶ ἀνέ-  
σεις παντοίων παθῶν, ἐπισκήψεις τε καὶ ἀσεβῶν. ὡς δὲ καὶ  
διὰ φείδης ἐλθεῖν φασκόντες, εὖ μάλα πεπεικασιν ἑαυτῶν  
τὰ θεῶα τιμῆς, τὰ δίκαια πράττειν· ἡμᾶς ὅτι τὰ μέ-  
γιστα ἀσεβεῖν, τὰς ἕτως ἑμφανῆς καὶ ἐνεργείας δυνάμεις  
ἐν ἑδρῇ λόγῳ τιθεμένους, ἀντικρὺς ὅτι ἀνομιῶντας—  
τὸ μὲν ἔν. πρῶτον ἰσοεικὸν ὅτι καὶ μυθικὸν τὸ θεολογίας εἶδος.  
ὅπου τις βέλτερον ποιητῶν τιθέσθω. ὥσπερ ἔν. καὶ φιλοσόφον τὸ  
διδάσκειν, διὰ τὸ μύθῳ φυσικώτερος ἀλλοιοῦνται ἀπηνυ-  
γμῶν. τὸ δὲ τρίτον, ὃ καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχόντων ὡς ἂν  
παλαιὸν ὁμῶς καὶ πολιτικὸν τιμῆς τε καὶ φυλακῆς ἐν  
νομοθέτῃ, μήτε τις ποιητῶν, φασί, μήτε φιλοσόφον κι-  
νῶν. Eusebius L. iv. Præp. Evang. cap. i. p. 130.

<sup>d</sup> Minutius Felix in Octavio, p. 65. Intende templis ac delubris Deorum, quibus Romana Civitas & protegitur & ornatur: Magis sunt augusta numinibus incolis, præsentibus inquilinis, quàm cultu insignia & muneribus opulenta. Inde adeò pleni & mixti Deo vates futura præcerpunt, dant cautellam periculis, morbis medelam, spem afflictis, opem mis-  
eris, solatium calamitatibus, laboribus levamentum: Etiam per quietem Deos videmus, audimus, agnoscimus. *Thus Cæcilius, yet a Heathen, produces Oracles as a sensible proof of his Religion, to which Octavius afterwards answers at large.* Athenagoras, in his Apology p. 102. proposes to himself the same Objection of the Heathens in these words. Ἐμποῖς ἂν ἔν. σωσὶ πάντας ὑπὲρ χάριτες, τίνι ἔν. λόγῳ ἐνία τὸ εἰδῶτων ἐνεργεῖν, εἰ μὴ εἰσι θεοί, ἐπ' οἷς ἰδρυμένα τὰ δάματα, καὶ ἰδὲ εἰς τὰς ἀλύχους καὶ ἀκινύτους εἰκόνας καθ' ἑαυτὰς ἰσχυρὲν χρεῖς τῷ κινῆναι. He answers it in the words which immediately follow, owning, that indeed many wonderful Effects were seen in the Temples, where Oracles were deliver'd; but that they ought to be ascrib'd, not to God, but to Devils, which he proves afterwards by many Authorities and Arguments.

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the Idolatrous Priests, who abus'd the credulity of the People: And that in all the Predictions and surprizing Cures, which different Authors have related of them, there was nothing of supernatural, that is, nothing which ought to be ascrib'd to the Devil.

You maintain this Opinion, tho' you are sensible it is entirely contrary, not only to what the Idolatrous People, and the greatest Part of the Philosophers believ'd in this matter, but even to what all the Fathers of the Church, all the Ecclesiastick Writers, and all Christians to this present time have thought of it. But this general Opposition is so far from deterring you, that you glory in it, and say in your Preface, *that you should have been concern'd, if any other had robb'd your Book of the Honour of the Newness of the Paradox.* This is the Effect of that courage you speak of in your Digression *upon the Ancients and Moderns*, which, you say, induces you to expose yourself without fear, for the Interest of Truth, to the Censures of all others. One ought indeed to have a great deal of Courage, to oppose the Opinion of all the World; and yet more to engage, not a few Heathen Poets or Orators, but all the most learned and most considerable Persons in all Christian Antiquity; and to endeavour to make the Fathers pass for Men, that reason'd ill, and usually advanc'd many things,

*Prejudices in favour of the common Opinion.*

*The Fathers unjustly accus'd of want of exactness in their Reasonings.*

\* *Preface to Histoire des Oracles: La seconde chose, que j'ay à dire, c'est, que l'on m'a averti, que le R. Pere Thomassin — avoit enlevé à ce livre-cy l'honneur de la nouveauté du Paradoxe — J'avoue, que j'en ay été un peu fâché; cependant je suis consolé par la lecture &c.*

† *Digression sur les Anciens, &c. p. 133. Je puis me vanter, que c'est avoir du courage, que de s'exposer pour l'intérêt de la vérité à la critique de tous les autres, dont le nombre n'est assurément pas méprisable,*

which they could not prove by sufficient Arguments. \* *Men's Opinions, you say, are not divided; all the World believes there was something supernatural in Oracles. From whence does this proceed? The Reason of it is easie to be found with respect to the time present. They believ'd in the first Ages of Christianity, that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils: We need no more than that, to believe it now. All which the Antients have said, whether good or bad, is apt to be often repeated; and what they themselves could not prove by sufficient Reasons, is now prov'd by their Authority alone. If they foresaw this, they did well in not always giving themselves the trouble of Reasoning so exactly.*

I must confess I find in this Discourse, neither that learned Christian which you are, who ought, I should think, to know the Fathers a little better, and have more respect for their Authority; nor that zealous Partizan of the Moderns, whom you extol much above the Antients, in the justness and closeness of their Reasoning; and whom notwithstanding I see here very universally accus'd of repeating without Judgment those ill Things, which the Antients have advanc'd without Proof.

But let us examine, if this Accusation be well founded, which almost equally involves the Antients and the Moderns. Let us see if the Holy Fathers had not sufficient reasons to assert, that Devils were Authors of the Heathen Oracles; and if the Modern Writers, who have follow'd them in this Opinion, were in the wrong in so doing; if that be one of those ill things, which they have learnt of the Antients, and repeated inconsiderately in their Works.

It is true, if the three Reasons which you

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\* Histoire des Oracles. Dissertation-1. p. 9, 10.

alledge under the name of the Primitive Christians, and afterwards refute, were really those that persuaded them, it were difficult to excuse them, and not agree with you, concerning the want of exactness in their reasonings. But I am oblig'd to tell you in the first place, that the Reasons you ascribe to them are by no means theirs; that not only they are not to be found in their Works, but a great number of others, quite different, are to be found there, and somewhat better than those you afford them. Give me leave to undertake to shew you this, and after I have refuted these bad Reasons you father upon them, to produce you those which did indeed persuade them; that you may judge if they were not sufficient to make them assert, That the Heathen Oracles were deliver'd by Devils.

*Bad Reasons father'd on them, which they never alledg'd.*

The first Reason, you say, which led them to embrace this Opinion was, \* *The surprizing Stories that went about concerning Oracles and Spirits*, upon which you cite the famous Story related by *Plutarch*, of the Pilot *Thamus*, and the

CHAP. III.  
*The first Reason father'd upon the Primitive Christians: the surprizing Stories concerning Dæmons and Oracles.*

\* Hist. Diff. t. ch. 1. p. 11.

\* *Plutarch. L. de Defectu Orac. Turnebo interprete. p. 280. De Dæmonum porro obitu narrationem quandam de homine nec stulto nec vano accepi. Nam Æmiliani Rhetoris, ex quo nonnulli etiam vestrum hoc audierunt, Epitherses fuit Pater, municeps meus Grammaticæ Professor. Is narrabat, quum aliquando Italiam cogitans navigium conscendisset, quod non solum mercium magnam vim, sed vectorum etiam magnam turbam ferret, sub vesperam ad Echinadas insulas pedirâs statum siluisse, naviq; in solo fluitante, & tandem ad Paxas delatâ, plurimis tum vigilantibus, multis etiam post coenam compotantibus, è Paxis repente vocem auditam esse ejusdem Thamus inclamantis. Erat autem Thamus Ægyptus Gubernator, multis, qui in navi erant, nomine ignotus. His igitur inclamatum siluisse, terribem vocanti partuisse: Illum majori vocis contentione imperâsse, ut, cum ad Palo-*

The Author's  
mistake con-  
cerning the  
Islands Echi-  
nades spoken  
of by Plu-  
tarch.

the Death of the great *Pan*, which was declar'd to him, when he was sailing towards certain Islands, as you say, of the *Agean* Sea. I suppose you would have said of the *Ionian* Sea, where all Geographers, <sup>1</sup> ancient and modern, place the Islands, of which *Plutarch* speaks, viz. between those of *Cephalonia* and *Corfu*, over against *Aetolia*, and by consequence very far from the *Agean* Sea. But this small mistake need not detain us. You afterwards produce the Oracle, which *Suidas* has related, and pretends was given to *Thulis* <sup>1</sup> King of *Egypt* by

des pervertisse esset, Pana magnum mortuum esse nuntiaret. Hoc audito Epitherstes consternatos, omnes stupore dicebat: Quumq; deliberarent, quod imperatum erat faciendum esset necne, hæc de re sic Thamum censuisse; si flatus spiraret, silentio prætervehendum esse; sin à ventis esset eo in loco quies & tranquillitas, quod audiverat esse prædicandum. Igitur ad Palodes perlatis cum aura nulla esset nec unda, prospectantem è puppi Thamum exclamasse, ut audierat, Pana magnum esse mortuum: Continuoq; cum vix dum finisset, secutum esse ingentem, non unius, sed multorum gemitum admiratione mixtum: Et quod multi adfuissent, narrabat, rei famam celerissime dissipatam esse Romæ, Thamumq; à Tiberio Cæsare accersitum: Tiberium verò usq; adeò huic rei fidem adjunxisse, ut, quis ille Pan esset, interrogaret & quæreret. Doctos verò homines, quos circa se frequentes habebat, censuisse, Panem illum esse, qui ex Mercurio & Penelope natus esset. Atque hæc quidem Philippus, quorundam etiam, qui aderant, memoriâ attestante, qui de Æmiliano sene se audivisse dixerunt.

<sup>1</sup> Stephanus Byzant. v. Ἐχίνας. Ἐχίνας ἦσαν πρὸς τὴν Ἀἰτωλίαν, αἵς Ἀχελῷῳ ποταμῷ περιβάλλονται. Ἰσχυρὸν δὲ Ἐχινάδες. Plinius L. iv. c. 12. p. 63. Ante Ætoliam Echinades. Idem ibid. p. 62. Ad Leucadiam Pæduz, quinq; M. discreta à Corcyra. Pomp. Mela L. ii. c. 7. De Mediterraneis Maris insulis, p. 32. In Ìonio Prote, Hyria, Cephalenia—in Epiro Echinades. Vide præterea Strabonem. L. x. p. 458. & inter recentiores Laurenbergium, & Cellarium. L. ii. c. 14. p. 798.

<sup>1</sup> Suidas v. Θέλις.

Πρῶτα Θεὸς μέγα κέλευσε, καὶ πρῶτα οὖν αὐτοῖς.  
Σύμφυλα δὲ πάντα καὶ εἰς ἑν ἰόντα, καὶ κρήτην αἰώνιον. ὡς  
σε ποσὶ βάσειε θνήσκει, ἀδελφὸν διατρίβων βίον. the

the God *Serapis*. Three other Oracles follow this, which you say *Eusebius* took from the Writings of *Porphyrus*, that great Enemy to Christianity; tho' we find in *Eusebius* \* only the Second of the Three you cite. Lastly, You add the famous Answer given to *Augustus* by the Oracle of *Delphos*, concerning the Hebrew Infant, first related by *Cedrenus* <sup>1</sup> and *Suidas* <sup>m</sup>, and afterwards by *Nicephorus* <sup>n</sup>. By such Stories, in your Opinion, the Fathers were induc'd to believe; that Devils were concern'd in Oracles.

Let me ask you in the first place, how it is possible, that *Origen*, *Eusebius*, *Tertullian*, *St. Cyprian*, *St. Athanasius*, and the rest of the Fathers, should have taken their Opinion concerning Oracles from Stories related by *Suidas*, *Cedrenus*, and *Nicephorus*, Histories they never heard mention'd, nor ever spoke of in their Works? How could you so soon forget the de-

*The Primitive Christians cou'd not ground their Opinion upon Stories related by Cedrenus, Suidas, and Nicephorus.*

\* L. v. *Præp. Evang.* cap. 16. p. 205.

Πυθῶν δ' ἔκ ἐστιν ἀναρρώσαι λόλον ὀμφῶ.

Ἡ δὲ καὶ δολιχοῖσιν ἀμαυρωθεῖσα χρόνοιςιν  
βέβλην κληίδας ἀμειψέτοιο σιωπῆς.

Ῥέξας δ' ὡς ἐστὶν ἐστὶν δειπνεῖν δὴμαλα φοῖβον.

<sup>1</sup> *Cedren. in Comp. Hist.* p. 182.

<sup>m</sup> *Suidas v. Ἀυγύς*.

<sup>n</sup> *Niceph. l. i. Hist. c. 17. interprete Lango. Cæsar autem Augustus quàmplurimis præclare feliciterq; gestis rebus clarus, primusq; ipse Monarcha renuntiatus, provectiore jam ætate ad Oraculum Pythii Apollinis venit: Et sacrificio omnium maximo, quod Hecatombe dicitur, Dæmoni oblato, quæsiuit, quisnam post eum Romanum administraturus esset imperium. At quom nullum ederetur responsum, alterum quoq; adjecit sacrificium, denuòq; rogavit: Quid ita Oraculum, pluribus verbis uti solitum, nunc tandem obticuiisset. Tum illud, parvâ interpositâ morâ, ad hunc modum respondit.*

Me Puer Hebræus, divos Deus ipse gubernans,  
Cedere sede jubet, tristemq; redire sub Orcum:  
Aris ergo dehinc tacitus abscedito nostris.

Tali responso accepto Cæsar Romam est reversus, atq; ibi in Capitolio Aram maximam extruxit cum ejusmodi Latina inscriptione: Ara Primogeniti Dei.

sign you propos'd to your self from the very beginning of your first Dissertation, which was to enquire into the Reasons, \* *Why all the Primitive Christians believ'd, that Oracles had something supernatural in them.* Can such Authors as you cite here, be put in the number of the Primitive Christians, or be produc'd as good Witnesses of what was believ'd near a thousand Years before they liv'd? Read the Title of your first Chapter over again. You express it thus; † *The first Reason why the Primitive Christians believ'd, that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils: The surprizing Scories which went about concerning Oracles and Spirits.* And in this very Chapter you relate Stories, which did not begin to be current in the World, till many Ages after those *Primitive Christians*, of whom you pretend to speak? Is this that justness of Reasoning you assume to your self above the *Ancients*, in quality of a *Modern*, and which ought especially to appear in the Writings of one, who arraigns the Fathers on this Head, and accuses them of advancing many things, without bringing sufficient Proofs of them? Did these Stories then, taken from *Suidas*, *Cedrenus*, and *Nicéphorus*, appear to you sufficient to prove what you have asserted concerning the Primitive Christians?

CHAP. IV. As to the Story of *Thamus* related by *Plutarch*, Eusebius only it is true, *Eusebius* has inserted it in his Book *de cited the Story Preparations Evangelicâ*. But can you say, 'tis on this Story he relies to prove, that the Oracles of the *Gentiles* were deliver'd by Devils? You cannot but know, that he produces a great many other Reasons for it in the 4th, 5th and

\* Hist. Diss. I. p. 11.

† Hist. ibid.

6th Books of his Work. As for this Story, as appears from the very Title ° of the Chapter where he relates it, he only makes use of it to shew, that the Heathens themselves had own'd, that the greatest part of their Oracles had ceas'd after the Birth of Christ, and that, not knowing the true Cause of this extraordinary Event, they had ascrib'd it to the Death of those *Dæmons* or Spirits, who, as they believ'd, presided over these Oracles. *Eusebius* did not con- Whether it were true or false, Eusebius had reason to cite it.cern himself, whether this Story were true or no. Perhaps he believ'd it no more than you do. At least it is very certain he did not believe, that these *Dæmons* could die. But what he concluded from this Story, true or false, was and always will be true, whatever you may say of it; 1<sup>st</sup>, That the Heathens acknowledg'd, that the greatest part of their Oracles had then actually ceas'd. 2<sup>dly</sup>, That those Stories, they told of the Death of their Gods or of their *Dæmons*, having never begun to spread abroad among them, till under the Reign of *Tiberius*, & at which time our Saviour expell'd those evil

• Euseb. l. 5. Præp. Evang. c. 15. in fine, p. 204. Loquens de Porphyrio. "Αλλε οὐκ ὁ αὐτὸς Κυρίως οὐκ ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐκλειποῖναι αὐτῶν τὰ βωμῶνα χρεσθαι. & Platin. c. 16. in ipso titulo: οὐκ ὅτι ἐκλειποῖναι χρεσθαι αὐτῶν ὁ Ἀπῆλλων. It is in this Chapter that he begins to relate the Testimony of Plutarch, concerning the silence of Oracles, and the Story of the death of the great Pan, which he continues in the Chapter following.

• Euseb. ibid. c. 17. p. 207, 208. Post relatam ex Plutarcho Historiam de Thamno, ut eum appellat: Τὰ βωμῶνα ὁ Πλάταρχος ἐπισημῶσαι ἡ ἀθήνη καὶ καυρὸν. ἐν δὲ οὐκ ἔστι δαμάτω γερῶναι τὸ δαίμων. ὅτι ὁ αὐτὸς Τίτιον, καὶ ὃν ὁ ημετέρος Σωτὴρ τὰς (ὡς ἀνθρώποις ποιεῖν) δαμάτω, πᾶν δὲ δαμόνων ἐκλείπει. τὸ δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἀναστρέφειν. βίη. ὅτι ἡδὲ τινὲς τὸ δαμόνων γονυπῶν αὐτὸν, ὃ ἐκλείπει; καὶ τὸ δαμόνων αὐτὸς ταῖς δαμάτω.

Spirits, it was easily known, to whom they were to ascribe the Silence of Oracles, and the overthrow of that Empire, which these *Demons* formerly exercis'd throughout the World by their means.

This is the only Reason, for which *Eusebius* mention'd this Story: He makes use of it as an Argument very proper to convince the Heathens, by the Testimony of their Authors themselves. It is therefore in vain, that you would make it pass for a Fable, since after all it will be ever undoubtedly true, that this Fable was current among the Heathens, and that *Plutarch* related it to explain the Silence of Oracles. This is sufficient to justify the Conduct of *Eusebius*, and to shew that he had reason to insert in his Work, as he has done, this (whether Fable or true Story) by copying this Place entirely out of *Plutarch*.

**CHAP. V.** The Oracles which the same *Eusebius* relates of the three from *Porphyrus* appear, you say, more intricate, Oracles, which I have already taken the Liberty to acquaint *Eusebius* is you, that of the Three which you cite, only said to have taken out of *Porphyrus*, there is the Second is to be found in *Eusebius*, which he produces, together with another that you do only one to be found in his not mention, for the same purpose as the Story of *Plutarch*; that is, to prove to the Heathens, Works, cited for the same purpose, with the that the greatest part of their Oracles had ceas'd, as even their most famous Authors confess'd. This is what he propos'd, and also what this Story of *Plutarch*, and the Oracles of *Porphyrus* which *Eusebius* mentions, do abundantly prove.

But do they likewise prove what you pretend to prove by citing them? Is it a certain Consequence, because *Eusebius* has produced these Stories, that therefore 'tis upon their authority he believ'd, that Oracles were deliver'd by

*Eusebius* had other Reasons, than those ascrib'd to him,

by Devils? To see the Falshood of such a Con-<sup>for believing,</sup> sequence you may only reflect, that *Eusebius* <sup>that Devils</sup> thro' all his Book professes to dispute against <sup>were the Au-</sup> the Heathens. Now what is more usual, than <sup>thors of Ora-</sup> to press an Adversary with those Authorities and Arguments, we judge most proper to convince him of any Truth, tho' they were not these very Authorities and Arguments, but others quite different, by which we our selves were convinc'd of it? But are not we more particularly oblig'd to do so, when those we undertake to convince, own an Authority and Principles quite different from ours? And is not this exactly the case of *Eusebius*? Could he when disputing with Pagans, alledge to them the Authority of the Holy Scripture, which they did not own, tho' for himself he own'd it, as all Christians did for the Rule of their Opinion? And when the other Fathers <sup>1</sup> undertook to prove to the Heathens the Unity and Providence of God, the Immortality of the Soul, the Rewards and Punishments of another Life, did not they, like him, make use of their Authors, of their Poets, and of their Philosophers? And yet can we conclude from thence, that it is upon the Authority of these Poets and Philosophers, and not upon that of the Holy Scriptures, that they believ'd all these Truths? So therefore, tho' *Eusebius* has produc'd against the Heathens the Oracles of *Purphyry*, and the Stories of *Plutarch*, you ought not thence to conclude, that it is on the like Authorities, that he believ'd Oracles were deliver'd by Devils.

<sup>1</sup> Justinus L. de Monarchiâ Dei. & in Parzen. ad Græcos. Clemens Alexandr. Protrept. ad Gentem. Theodoret. de Affect. Græcorum curandis. Lactant. &c.

What I have said hitherto proves in my Opinion clearly enough, that you were in the wrong to assert, that the first Reason the Primitive Christians had, to believe Devils to be the Authors of Oracles, was the surprising Stories that went about concerning Oracles and Spirits: I might then pass on to examine the Second; which with as little Justice you also ascribe to them. But since with relation to *Eusebius*, and the Oracles he mentions from *Porphyry*, you make your utmost Efforts, to render the Book of that Philosopher suspected, as well as the Integrity of the Primitive Christians, whom you suspect to have forg'd it: Give me leave before I go any farther, to examine the Solidity of your Reasonings, and of your Conjectures upon this Subject.

CHAP. VI. \* *Porphyry*, you say, was not so unwhimsical, as to furnish Arms against the Heathen Religion, without the Conjectures being oblig'd thereto by the consequences of some Argument, and that is what does not appear here. To *Porphyry*, you add, that takes pleasure in ruining his own Religion, and establishing ours. In truth this is suspicious of it self. No, Sir, *Porphyry* did not design, in the Book whence *Eusebius* has taken the Oracles he relates, to ruin his own Religion and establish ours. It is evident on the contrary, that he labour'd with all his Might, to maintain his own and overthrow ours; and that he set about it in a way very likely to make impression upon the Minds of the Heathen. To be convinc'd of this you need only read what we have left of his Works in *Eusebius*, and in *St. Augustin*. It

\* Hist. Diff. i. c. 4. p. 51.

† Euseb. L. iv. Præp. Evang. cap. 6, & 7.

‡ August. L. xix. De Civit. Dei, c. 23.

is plain he aims almost equally at these two ends. He maintains Paganism by shewing, that the Gods have by their Oracles confirm'd all the Opinions and Superstitions of it. He endeavours to subvert Christianity by shewing, That the same Gods condemn it in their Oracles, and speak of it only as of a miserable Error. His Book was entitl'd *Philosophy from Oracles*. Now this Philosophy of which he proposes to speak, is particularly *Magick*; or to give it with him a less odious Name, *Theurgie*, which teaches after what manner the Soul is to be prepar'd and purify'd, to make it capable of conversing familiarly with *Dæmons*. 'Tis thus he himself explains the Subject and Design of his Book. " This Collection, says he, contains " a great many Doctrines of Philosophy, of the Truth of which the Gods themselves have assur'd us by their Oracles. We " shall speak also of the manner of consulting " them (that is of *Theurgie*) because this kind " of Knowledge is of great help to Contem- " plation, and to the entire Purgation of the

*The design of this Book of Porphyry, and the Matters of which he treats therein.*

\* Euseb. L. iv. Præp. Evang. c. 6. p. 143. sub finem, loquens de Porphyrio: Οὗτος τοις ἱερῶν ἐν οἷς ἐπέσχετο περὶ τῶν ἐν λογίων φιλοσοφίας, (σωσῶν) ἐποίησε κενώσας τὰς Ἀπολλωνίου καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν θεῶν τε καὶ ἀσθεῶν δαίμονας. ὅς καὶ μάστιγα ἐπαλάττωσεν αὐτῶν ἡγήσας ἱκανὸς εἶναι εἰς τὴν ἀποδείξιν τῆς θεολογικῆς ἀρετῆς, εἰς τὴν περὶ θεῶν, ὡς αὐτῶν φίλον ὀνομαζέειν, θεοσοφίας.

\* Porphyry. apud Eusebium, L. iv. Pr. Ev. c. 7. p. 143, 144. Ἐξίς ἡ παρῶσα (σωσῶν) πολλῶν καὶ τῶν κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν δογματῶν ἀνασφραγῶν, ὡς οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ἀληθῶν ἔχουσιν ἐθίαισι. ἐπὶ ὅλῳ δὲ καὶ τῶν χερσηκῶν ἀλβύδα παρῶν ματείας, ἥτις πρὸς τὴν θεωρίαν ὀνήσκει καὶ τὸ ἕλκεν καθαροῖν τῶν βίων. καὶ δὲ ἔχει ἀφίλειαν ἡ (σωσῶν), μάστιγα εἶσεν, ὅσοι περὶ τῶν ἀλβύδων ἀδυναστεύουσιν, ἡσυχάζουσιν καὶ ἐν θεῶν ἐμπροσθεν τυχόντες, ἀνέκτασιν λαβεῖν τὴν ἀρετήν, διὰ τὴν τῶν λογίων ἀξιόπιστον διδασκαλίαν.

“ Soul,

“ Soul. As to the usefulness of this Work,  
 “ They particularly will understand it, who  
 “ thro’ their vehement desire of discovering  
 “ the Truth, have sometimes wish’d to enjoy  
 “ the Presence and Conversation of the Gods,  
 “ that they might be set free from all their  
 “ doubts by Masters so sure, and so worthy of  
 “ belief. He afterwards conjures \* the Person,  
 to whom he sends his Book, to keep it very se-  
 cret, and not allow it to be read indifferently  
 by all People.

To make good the Design he there proposes  
 to himself, he relates a great many Oracles,  
 which teach and authorize all the superstitions  
 of Paganism, and of Magick, and several also  
 which condemn Christianity, and blaspheme  
 against Christ himself; as among others, that  
 which St. *Augustin* mentions \* at the Beginning  
 of the 23d Chapter of his 19th Book *de Civitate*  
*Dei*. Hereto he adds his Reflections, in which

\* Id. *ibid*, c. 8. p. 144. Σὺ δ’ ἄπορσι καὶ ταῦτα περιῶ  
 μὴ δημοσιῶν, μὴ δ’ ἔχει καὶ τῶ βασιλέων ῥίπλιν αὐτὰ  
 δόξης ἕνεκα ἢ κέρδους. — & Paulo post: Ταῦτά μοι ὡς  
 ἀρρήτων τὰ ἀρρητότερα κρύψλειν.

\* Nam in libris, quos περὶ τῆ ἐκ λογίων φιλοσοφίας ap-  
 pellat, in quibus exequitur atq; conscribit rerum ad Philo-  
 sophiam pertinentium velut divina responsa, ut ipsa verba  
 ejus, quemadmodum ex Lingua Græcâ in Latinam interpre-  
 tata sunt, ponam. Interroganti inquit, quem deum pla-  
 cando revocare possit uxorem suam à Christianismo, hæc ait  
 verbis Apollo. Deinde verba velut Apollinis ista sunt.  
 Forè magis poteris in aquâ impressis literis scribere, aut in-  
 flans pennas leves per aera ut avis volare, quàm semel pol-  
 laræ revoces impie uxoris sensum. Pergat quomodo vult  
 inanibus fallaciis perseverans, & lamentationibus fallacissimis  
 mortuum Deum cantans, quem judicibus recta sentientibus  
 perditum, pessima in speciosis ferro juncta mors interfecit.  
 Deinde post hos versus Apollinis, qui non stante metro Latine  
 interpretari sunt, subjunxit atq; ait: In his quidem tergiver-  
 sationem irremediabilis sententiæ eorum manifestavit, dicens,  
 quoniam Judæi suscipiunt Deum magis quàm isti.

you see him maintain his Character to the end; which is that of one bigotted with Idolatry and Magick, and at the same time furiously transported against the Christian Religion.

Of the number of those Oracles which *Porphry* mentions in favour of Idolatry, and of his diabolick Art of Theurgy, are those that *Eusebius* \* has preserv'd, which teach what kind of Sacrifices are to be offer'd to the Gods Celestial, Terrestrial, and Infernal; what Figures, and what Characters are to be us'd to call them forth, and oblige them to give answers even against their Wills. But the greatest part of these pretended Deities, which were really Devils, had in his time ceas'd from giving answers, in those famous Oracles which bore their Names. As *Porphry* could not deny a Fact so evident, so it was also of great importance to him, to deprive the Christians, if it were possible, of the Argument they drew from thence against the Religion of the Heathen. In order to do this, He mentions two \* Oracles that ascribe this Silence to the length of Time, which had dissipated the Vapours and Exhala-

*Why he speaks in it of the Silence of Oracles.*

\* Euseb. L. iv. Pr. Ev. c. 9. & L. v. c. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & sequentibus.

\* Euseb. L. v. Pr. Ev. c. 16. p. 204.

Ἀποὶ δέοι Πυθώ κλειῖν τε μανίδμασιν φοίβῃ

Ἀυδῆσθ' ὅτις ἡμέτερον θεμίσωδον ὁμοῖς.

Μυρία μ' γαίης μανήϊα δίσκελα νότῳ

Ἐβλύθη, πηλαίτε ἢ ἄδμασιν διηήϊα.

Καὶ τὰ μ' ἄψ' χθονίοισι ἴσαι κόλποισι ἔδεκτο

Ἀυτῇ γαῖα χανῶσα. τὰ δ' ὄλεσε μυρίθ' αἰών.

Μένῳ δ' Ἡελίῳ φασμι μερότων εἰσέτ' ἔασιν

Ἐν Διδύμων γυάλοισι Μυκαλήϊον ἔνθεον ὕδαρ,

Πυθῶνθ' ἑνὰ πένθ' ἴσαι Παργασίον αἶπθ',

Καὶ κραναὴ Κλαεῖν, τεραχὺ σῶμα φοιβάδθ' ὁμοῖς.

Νικαυδοὶ ἢ Κρῶν ἔσθ.

Πυθῶνθ' δὲκ ὅθιν, ut supra, p. 21.

flows, that were the cause of that Prophetic Fury and Enthusiasm. *Eusebius* without troubling himself to confute this bad Reason, is contented with the Concession of *Apollo* and of *Porphyry*, concerning the silence of Oracles; because that was sufficient for him, and what anyone he desir'd.

Why he attributes the Cause of this silence to the failure of Exhalations.

Pray, Sir, tell me what there is in all this, that may be justly suspected, and could induce you to think, that some Christian might have forg'd these Oracles in favour of that Religion, as you would make us believe? Was it not natural for *Porphyry*, in a Book where he mentions so many Oracles in favour of the Heathen and against the Christian Religion, to speak of the Silence to which most of these Oracles were reduc'd? A Silence so prejudicial to the former, and of so much advantage to the latter. Could he and the Authors of the Oracles, whoever they might be, bring a more specious Reason, and one that would better cover their Confusion? Does not *Plutarch*<sup>a</sup> make use of it to explain this so extraordinary Silence, of which he did not know the true Cause? Besides who was there that could better enter into the design of *Porphyry's* Book? Proposing to teach the Art of calling forth *Demons*, and soaring by their Assistance to the most sublime discoveries, could he forbear among other means that he mentions of doing this, to

<sup>a</sup> Plutarch. L. De Defect. Orac. p. 771. Ταῦτα δὲ καὶ μαγικῶν πνευμάτων διανοήσας, ὡς ἐκ ἐχόντων αἰθέριον καὶ αἴθρα καὶ δύναμιν, ἀλλ' ὑποκειμένην μεταβολαῖς. Καὶ γὰρ ὁμοῦς καὶ ἁπλοῦς εἶδος ἐστὶ κατὰ σεννυμίας, καὶ περισυνῶν ἐκπεσόντων διαφορῶν, μάλιστα ὅτε καὶ γῆς ὑποστάσις καὶ λαμβάνουσι ἰζήματα καὶ ὑψίστου, ἐν βάθει μάλιστα τὰς ἀγαθωμίας, ἢ τυφλῶς τὸ παρῆπαν.

speak

Speak of the Exhalations of certain places of the Earth, which as the Philosophers of those times<sup>b</sup> believ'd, did contribute very much to attract these *Dæmons*, which they call'd their Gods; and to make them enter into the Bodies of those, who receiv'd these Exhalations into themselves.

I know that to make good your *sermizes*, CHAP. VII.  
and artfully dispose your Reader to favour The Primitive  
them, you enlarge a great deal in extravagant Christians ac-  
Accusations against the Primitive Christians, cus'd of having  
whom you would make pass, as well as the forg'd Books in  
Idoltrous Priests, for Cheats and Impostures, favour of their  
who to favour Christianity, made no difficulty Religion.  
of forging a great many Books. That is an ordinary artifice with those, who would fain get rid of the Authority of the Fathers, and of the ancient Authors, when they find them opposite to the novelty of those Opinions they would introduce. Wanting good Reasons to solve the Difficulties, with which they may be urg'd on that side, and of the Force of which they are sufficiently sensible, by the help of these Suppositions and pretended Forgeries they at once cut the Knots which they can't untie.

I think however, you should have been a little more cautious in framing such Accusations against the Primitive Christians, whose eminent Vertue, and the abhorrence they had of lying<sup>c</sup> and deceit, especially in point of Religion. This unjust Accusation confuted.

<sup>b</sup> Iamblichus. L. De Myst. Sect. 3. cap. 18.

<sup>c</sup> The Primitive Christians would not have told so much as one Lie, to preserve themselves from the most cruel Punishments, or from Death it self. 'Tis this Protestation they make by the Mouth of St. Justin Martyr: *Οὐ βέλβιδε ἑνὶ ἑδδονοσεύεσσι Vivere molimus mendaciorū quidquam loquentes.* Justin. Apol.

gion, ought to have shelter'd them; and that the rather, because you produce no other Proofs of your Accusation against them, but the Books of *Mercurius Tresmegistus*, and of the *Sybill*s; as if what the Fathers have cited out of them were indubitably forg'd, and own'd for such by all the Learned; which certainly is not so, and tho' it were, we ought further to be convinc'd, that these Forgeries come rather from Christians, than from some Hellenist Jews, or from the Hereticks of the first Ages.

These last are those you have reason to accuse of these kinds of Impostures: They have practis'd a great number of them, to maintain or to propagate their Errours. Accordingly the Fathers have not been wanting to discover and declare the Falshood of them, as among others *Origen*<sup>d</sup>, and *Epiphanius*

Apol. ii. ad Antoninum Plum, p. 57. *The Christian Woman, whose encomium St. Hierom hath given us, made almost the same Protestation, when she was just going to be beheaded, upon a false accusation of Adultery.* Tu, inquit, testis es Domine Jesu, cui occultum nihil est, qui es scrutator renum & cordis, non ideo me negare velle, ne peream; sed ideo mentiri nolle, ne peccem. Hieronym. de Muliere septies ista. p. 237. *I may add here what St. Augustin relates of the Bishop Firmus.* Fecit hoc Episcopus quondam Tagastensis Ecclesiæ, Firmus nomine, firmior voluntate. Nam cum ab eo quæreretur homo jussu Imperatoris per apparitores ab eo missos, quem ad se confugientem diligentia quantâ poterat, occultabat; respondit quærentibus: Nec mentiri se posse, nec prodere. Passusq; multa tormenta corporis, nondum enim erant Imperatores Christiani, permansit in sententiâ. Aug. L. de Mend. ad Consent. cap. 13. p. 12.

<sup>d</sup> Origen. Hom. 1. in Lucam: T. 3. p. 94. Ecclesia quatuor habet Evangelia, hæresis plurima; è quibus quoddam scribitur secundum Ægyptios, aliud juxta duodecim Apostolos. Ausus fuit & Basilides scribere Evangelium, & suo illud nomine titolare. — scio quoddam Evangelium, quod appel-

*hinc* \*. Thereby they have shewn they were not such as would let themselves be cheated so easily, as you pretend; nor were inclin'd to suffer those who were put under them, to go about to impose upon others, whatever good Intention they might otherwise have. You know the Story of that Priest of Asia, of whom *Tertullian* † and *St. Hierom* ‡ make mention, who to do honour to *St. Paul*, endeavouring to vend

*The Fathers were zealous against Forgeries, and skilful in discovering them.*

appellatur secundum Thomam & juxta Matthiam, & alia plura legimus, ne quod ignorare videremur, propter eos qui se putant aliquid scire, si ista cognoverint. Sed in his nihil aliud probamus, nisi quod Ecclesia.

\* Epiphanius. Hæresi 26. quæ est Gnosticorum. cap. 8. p. 89. Καὶ τὰ μὲν βιβλία αὐτῶν πολλὰ. Ἐρωτήσεις γὰρ τινὰς Μαρίας ἐκλήθεν, ἄλλοι δὲ εἰς τὴν περὶ τῆς ἑσθίας καὶ τῆς ἀποκαλύψεως δὲ τῆς Ἀδὰμ ἄλλας λέγουσιν, Ευαγγέλια δὲ ἕτερα εἰς ὄνομα τῆς μαθητρὸς (ὡς γὰρ λέγει τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). Idem Hæresi 30. quæ est Ebionitarum. cap. 15. p. 139. Χρῆς δὲ καὶ ἄλλαις τισὶ βίβλοις, δῆθεν τῶν προφῶντων καλεσθῆναι Πέτρον, καὶ διὰ Κλήμεντος γεγραμμένης, καθιδέξαντες μὲν τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς, ὁλίγα δὲ ἀληθινὰ εἰσάγοντες, ὡς αὐτὸς Κλήμης αὐτῶν καὶ πάντα ἐλέγξῃ, ἀφ' ὧν ἐξελέγξεν ἐπιστολῶν ἐκκυκλίον, καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἁγίαις Ἐκκλησίαις ἀναγινώσκοντων. Et paulo post. cap. 16. p. 140. Προφῆται δὲ ἄλλαι καλεῖσιν Ἀποστόλων (ἦ), ἐν αἷς πολλὰ τὰ ἀσεβείας, αὐτῶν ἐμπλεῖα.

† Tertul. L. De Baptismo. cap. 17. p. 231. Quod si quæ Paulo perperam adscripta sunt, ad licentiam mulierum dæcendi tinguendiq; defendunt; sciant in Asia Presbyterum, qui eam Scripturam construxit, quasi titulo Pauli de suo. cumsumans, convictum atq; confessum, id se amore Pauli fecisse, loco decessisse.

‡ Hieronym. L. De Script. Eccles. ubi de S. Luca. p. 271. Igitur Πέτρος Pauli & Theclæ, & totam Baptizati Leonis fabulam inter Apocryphas Scripturas computamus. Quale enim est ut individuus Comes Apostoli, inter cæteras ejus res, hoc solum ignoraverit. Sed & Tertullianus vicinus eorum temporum, refert Presbyterum quendam in Asia Σπυρίδην Apostoli Pauli, convictum apud Joannem, quod Authorem esset libri, & confessum se hoc Pauli amore fecisse, & ob id excidisse.

his pious Conceits, relating to the Travels of that Apostle and St. *Thecla*, was for his Punishment most shamefully degraded. Which shews how discerning the Bishops were from the first Ages of the Church, in discovering these kinds of Forgeries, and how strict in rejecting them. They could all have truly said, what *Serapion*<sup>a</sup> Bishop of *Antioch*, answer'd to the Christians of the City of *Rhossus* in *Cilicia*. " We have  
 " Judgment and Penetration enough to distinguish supposititious Works, and to know,  
 " they are not warranted by Tradition. The Dispute was concerning a Gospel ascrib'd to St. *Peter*, which some believ'd Gennine, and of which *Serapion* immediately discovered the Forgery.

But to return to *Porphyry*. His Book of *Philosophy from Oracles* is authoriz'd by so good Witnesses, and so clear Proofs, that I believe you cannot succeed in your design, to make it pass for Supposititious. For not to speak of *Theodorat*<sup>1</sup>, of St. *Augustin*<sup>b</sup>, and of *Julius Firmicus*<sup>1</sup>, who quote it, and produce Extracts out of it, *Eusebius*, who lived and writ<sup>c</sup> pretty

<sup>a</sup> Euseb. Hist. L. vi. c. 12. Ἡμεῖς δὲ ἀδελφοὶ καὶ Πίτες καὶ τὸν ἄλλοις Ἀποστόλους ἀποδεχόμεθα ὡς Χεῖρον. Τὰ δὲ ὀνόματι αὐτῶν ἰδιδυπίζεσθαι, ὡς ἐμπειροὶ φησὶν ἡμεῖς, γινώσκοντες, ὅτι τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐπαρὰ δόξαν.

<sup>1</sup> Theodorit. L. De Græc. Affect. Serm. x. de Orac.

<sup>b</sup> August. L. xix. De Civit. Dei. c. 23.

<sup>1</sup> Julius Firmicus Maternus. L. De Errore-prophan. Religionis. cap. 14. p. 29. In Libris enim, quos appellat φησὶ ἐκλογίαν φιλοσοφίας (corrigere ἐκ λογίων) Majestatem ejus (*Serapidis*) prædicans, de infirmitate confessus est. In primis enim Librorum partibus, id est in ipsis auspiciis positus dixit: Serapis vocatus & intra Corpus hominis collocatus talia respondit.

<sup>c</sup> Hieron. L. De Script. Eccles. ubi de Eusebio. p. 296. In Esaiam Libri decem, & contra Porphyrium qui eodem tempore scribebat in Sicilia, ut quidam putant, Libri triginta, de quibus ad me viginti tantum pervenerunt.

near the same time with this Philosopher, <sup>The Book of</sup> was too well inform'd of all the Works he had compos'd, to be deceiv'd about this in question; <sup>Philosophy from Oracles</sup> and too judicious to ground a great part of his <sup>is unquestionably</sup> *Preparatio Evangelica* on a Book, which had not been incontestably his, to whom it was attributed, and who was so known and so famous at that time. Besides the Sophist *Eunapius* <sup>a</sup>, who cannot be suspected by you, and who liv'd a little time after *Porphyry*, and knew him perfectly well, speaks of this Book, though after a manner something intricate, in his Life of that Philosopher. In one word, the stile of this Author, his violent prejudice in favour of the Heathen Religion, and hatred against the Chri-

<sup>a</sup> *Eunapius in vita Porphyri. p. 35. De ejus libris loquens, ait, (Interprete Hadriano Junio cujus versio sola ad manum est) Nam Philosophica, & quæ in Scientiis tradidit, caput humanum superant, majoraq; sunt, quam ut suis ea verbis enunciare possit. Eunapius says, that what Porphyry teaches in his Books of Philosophy is above the reach of human Understanding, because in them this Philosopher treats of the Nature of the Gods and Demons; of their Qualities and Operations; of the manner of calling them forth, and obliging them to give Answers: Lastly, of several Doctrines and Practices of his Theurgick Philosophy; such (says he himself, Euseb. Præp. Evang. L. iv. cap. 7. p. 143.) as the Gods have taught by their Oracles: 'Ος οἱ θεοὶ τ' ἀληθῆς ἔχον ἐθέσαις. Eunapius adds, That these Matters are so sublime, that Porphyry dar'd not undertake to mix his own words with them. It is, that Porphyry professes in this Book, to say nothing of himself, but religiously to set down the very Terms of the Oracles, without adding or diminishing any thing. See how he explains himself hereupon at the very beginning: Euseb. ibid. 'Επεὶ καὶ αὐτὸς θεὸς ὑποτίθεται, ὡς ἐδὲν ἄτε προσέειπε, ἔτε ἀσέβητον ἢ χρηστῶν νοημάτων· εἰ μὴ τε λῆξιν ἡρώδη καὶ διωκῶσα, ἢ πρὸς τὸ λαβεῖν μελαγχολικὰ, ἢ τὸ μέγιστον ἑλλειπτον ἀνεπλήρωσα, ὥτι ἢ μὴ πρὸς ἢ πρὸς βίαν βίαν τῶν διδόντων· ὡς τὸν τε γὰρ ἀκρίβητι ἢ ῥηθίῳ διατίθησα, εὐλαβέως ἢ ἐκ τῶν ἀσέβων μάλλον, ἢ ἢ ἐκ τῶν ἱεροσυλίας τιμωρῶν ἐποικίλῳ δίδωμι.*

D a

ftian,

Man, which appear evidently in this Book, and the Matters of *Theurgy* and of *Magick*, of which he there treats, make him too well known to fear your suspicions, which are grounded upon meer imaginations, can ever make impression upon any one.

CHAP.VIII. But you add, \* *We are told out of Porphyry, An enquiry of I know not how many other Oracles, most clear whether Porphyry related any Oracles concerning the Resurrection of the Heathens, overwhelms us with proofs of the and Ascension of Christian Religion.* I know not where you have read these Oracles, so clear and positive concerning those Mysteries of the Life of our Saviour. If I am not mistaken, you mean those which *Eusebius* relates from *Porphyry*, in the 3d Book of his *Demonstratio Evangelica*, to shew by the Testimony of the Heathens themselves, that our Saviour was not an Impostor, nor a Magician, as some of them had the boldness to assert. I'll set down the Passage of *Porphyry*, ° translated word for word, which will shew

\* Hist. Diff. l. c. 4. p. 52, 53.

° Porphyrius apud Eusebium. L. 3. Demonstr. Evang. sub finem. p. 134. Παράδοξον ἴσως δοξείεν ἂν σισιν ἢ τὸ μέλλον λέγειν ὑπὸ ἡμῶν: ἃ γὰρ χεῖρον οἱ θεοὶ εὐσεβέσασιν ἀπεφύλακτο καὶ ἀθάνατον γεγονότα, ἐνυμήτως τε αὐτῷ μνημονεύουσι— καὶ γὰρ τὸ χεῖρ ἑρμηνεύσασιν, εἰ βῆ θεός, ἐποίησιν.

Ὅτι μὲν ἀθανάτη ψυχὴ μὴ σῶμα περιβαίνει  
Τισιν ὅτι σοφίᾳ τελεμνημένη· ἀλλὰ καὶ ψυχὴ

Ἄνεργος εὐσεβείᾳ περιφερέσασιν βῆν ἐκείνῳ.

εὐσεβέσασιν ἀεὶ ἐρη αὐτόν, καὶ ἃ ψυχὴν αὐτῷ, καθάπερ καὶ ἃ ἄλλων, μὴ θάνατον ἀπαθανάσειν αὐταῖς· ἢν εἶδον ἀνθρώποις τῶν χεῖριαν· ἐπερὶ ἡσαντων ἢ διὰ τι ἐκολάσθη, ἐχρησεν:

Σῶμα

shew clearly how much you are mistaken in this matter.

“What we are going to add, says this Philosopher, will perhaps appear surprizing to many, that the Gods have said in their Oracles, that Christ was a most Religious Man, and that he had been made Immortal. They speak of him with praise. Thus being ask’d if he were God, the Oracle gave this answer: All wise Men know that the Soul being Immortal subsists after the Body, and the Soul of this Man is very much distinguish’d by his Piety. The Oracle says therefore (continues *Porphry*) that Christ was very pious, and that his Soul, as that of other Men, had been made Immortal after his Death, and that it was that Soul which the ignorant Christians worshipp’d. Afterwards the Oracle being ask’d, why they had put him to Death, answer’d thus: The Body is always expos’d to Torments, but the Souls of good Men go into Heaven. After which (says *Eusebius*) *Porphry* adds, He was therefore a pious Man, and was taken up into Heaven, as pious Men are. You must not therefore speak ill of him, but pity the folly of those Men — This is what *Eusebius* cites from *Porphry*, to shew the Heathens, that our Saviour was no Impostor; since the Oracles themselves own’d, he was a good Man, and that his Soul, like those of other good Men, was receiv’d up into Heaven. These last

*The confutation of this ridiculous Conceit.*

Σῶμα μὲν ἀδρανέσιν βασιλῶσι δὲ παρέβλητο,  
 Ψυχὴ δ’ εὐσεβῶν εἰς ἑρῆιον πτόλον ἦλθε —  
 αὐτὸς ἂν εὐσεβὴς καὶ εἰς ἑρῆν ἦεν· οἱ εὐσεβεῖς χωρήσας·  
 ὥς τι τὸτον μὲν ἢ βλασφημῆσαι, ἐλεήσεις; ὃ τ’ ἀνθρώπων τ’  
 ἀνθρῶπων.

words without doubt made you say, that *Ensebius* related from *Porphry* a great many Oracles most clear and positive concerning the Person of Christ, concerning his Resurrection and Ascension. Now see whether you had reason to assert this. It is true *Ensebius* left out many things of this Passage of *Porphry*, because they made nothing to his purpose. But St. *Augustin* relates it more at large, and thereby makes us yet better comprehend the true sense of those Oracles, of which we are speaking, and how much you are mistaken in that sense which you have given them. His words are these <sup>p</sup>.

“ This

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<sup>p</sup> August. L. xix. De Civit. Dei, cap. 23. p. 661. Dicit etiam bona Philosophus iste de Christo, quasi oblitus illius, de qua paulò ante locuti sumus, contumelia suæ: Aut quasi in somnis Dii ejus maledixerint Christo, & evigilantes eum bonum esse cognoverint; dignèq; laudaverint. Deniq; tanquam mirabile aliquid atq; incredibile prolaturus: Præter opinionem, inquit, profectò quibusdam videatur esse, quod dicturi sumus: Christum enim Dii piissimum pronuntiaverunt, & immortalem factum, & cum bonâ prædicatione ejus meminerunt. Christianos autem pollutos, inquit, & contaminatos, & Errorè implicatos esse dicunt; & multis talibus adversus eos Blasphemiis utuntur. Deinde subjicit velut Deorum Oracula blasphemantium Christianos. Et post hæc: De Christo autem, inquit, interrogantibus, si est Deus, ait Hecate, quoniam quidem immortalis anima post Corpus ut incedit nostri: à Sapientiâ autem abscissa semper errat: Viri pietate præstantissimi est illa anima, hanc colunt alienâ à se veritate. Deinde post verba ejus quasi Oraculi sua ipse contexens: Piissimum igitur virum, inquit, eum dixit, & ejus animam, sicut & aliorum piorum, post obitum immortalitate donatam; & hanc colere Christianos errantes. Interrogantibus autem, inquit, cur ergo damnatus est, oraculo respondit Dea. Corpus quidem debilitantibus tormentis semper oppositum est: Anima autem piorum cælesti sedi infidet. Illa verò anima aliis animabus fatalitèr dedit, quibus fata non annuerunt deorum obtinere dona, neq; habere Jovis immortalis agnitionem, Errorè implicari. Propterea ergo Diis exosi; quia quibus fato non fuit nôsse Deum, nec dona

" This Philosopher also speaks well of  
 " Christ, as if he had forgot the outrageous  
 " Terms we have just mention'd; or as if the  
 " Gods had never spoke ill of him, but when  
 " they were asleep, and knowing him better  
 " when awake, had given him the Praises he  
 " deserves: For as if he were going to tell  
 " something wonderful and incredible. Some,  
 " says he, will be surpriz'd without doubt at  
 " what we are going to say. 'Tis that the  
 " Gods have declar'd, that Christ was a good  
 " Man, and was made Immortal, and that they  
 " have spoke honourably of him. But as to  
 " the Christians, (continues he) the Gods assure  
 " us, they are People defil'd with Crimes, and  
 " blinded with Error; and they charge them  
 " also with many other Infamies of this kind.  
 " Then (as St. *Augustin* goes on) *Porphyry* relates  
 " the Oracles of the Gods, fill'd with outrageous  
 " Terms against the Christians: After which  
 " he adds, as to what relates to Christ, *Hecate*  
 " gave this answer to those who ask'd her,  
 " whether he were a God: You know the Soul  
 " being Immortal subsists after the Body, but  
 " when it is separated from Wisdom it always  
 " wanders. That of which you speak, is the  
 " Soul of a very good Man, but they who  
 " worship it are in an Errour. *Porphyry* mak-  
 " ing his Reflections on this Oracle, adds: The  
 " Oracle says then, that Christ was a very good  
 " Man, and that his Soul, as that of other good  
 " Men, was made immortal after his Death;  
 " and that it was that Soul, which the mislead

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à Diis accipere, his fatalitèr dedit iste Errore implicari. Ipse  
 verò pius & in cœlum, sicut pii, concessit. Itaq; hunc qui-  
 dem non blasphemabis, miraberis autem hominum demen-  
 tiam, ex eo in eis facile præceptq; periculum.

“ Christians worshipped. But (continues he)  
 “ the Goddess being ask’d, why then he was  
 “ condemn’d to death, by the same Oracle gave  
 “ this answer; The Body is always expos’d to  
 “ Torments, but the Souls of good Men have  
 “ Heaven for their abode. As to that Soul,  
 “ of which you speak, ’tis the fatal Cause of  
 “ the Errour of those, whom the Destinies  
 “ have not allow’d to receive the Presents of  
 “ the Gods, nor to have the Knowledge of the  
 “ great *Jupiter*: for which Cause the Gods ab-  
 “ hor them. Therefore you must speak no evil  
 “ of him, but take pity of the folly of those;  
 “ whom he has occasion’d to fall into Errour.

You see, Sir, what you call \* *most clear and positive Oracles concerning the Person of Christ, concerning his Resurrection and Ascension.* You see what makes you say, *the most prepossess’d and most learned of the Heathens overwhelms us with proofs of the Christian Religion*: And what it is, that induces you to suspect, that the Christians might probably have forg’d these Oracles in favour of Christianity. I know not whether you will find many of your Opinion, but I know ve-

*The Opinion of St. Augustin on this Subject very different from that of Mr. De Fontenelle.* ry well, that St. *Augustin* is not; since he adds, “ Who is so blind as not to see, either that “ this

\* Hist. ibid.

“ August. ibid. p. 662. Quis ita stultus est, ut non intelligat, aut ab homine callido, eoq; Christianis inimicissimo, hæc oracula fuisse conficta, aut consilio simili ab impuris demonibus ista fuisse responsa; ut scilicet, quoniam laudant Christum, propterea credantur veraciter vituperare Christianos; atq; ita, si possint, intercludant viam salutis æternæ, in quâ sit quisq; Christianus? Sæpe quippe nocendi astutiz milleformi sentiunt non esse contrarium, si credatur iis laudantibus Christum, dum tamen credatur etiam vituperantibus Christianos, ut eum qui utrumq; crediderit, talem Christi faciant

" this crafty and declar'd Enemy of the Christi-  
 " ans has forg'd these Oracles, or that they  
 " were deliver'd by Devils with this design,  
 " that by their praising Christ it may be be-  
 " liev'd, they have reason to blame the Christi-  
 " ans; and that they may thereby hinder Men  
 " from embracing the Christian Religion, which  
 " is the way that leads to eternal Salvation: for  
 " as they are infinitely malicious and artful,  
 " they do not care, tho' they are believ'd when  
 " they praise Christ, provided they may be  
 " equally believ'd, when they speak evil of  
 " Christians; and that by consequence they,  
 " who give credit to their Oracles, may so look  
 " upon Christ, as at the same time to abhor the  
 " Christian Religion; and never embracing it,  
 " may therefore never by means of this Saviour  
 " be deliver'd from the tyranny of these evil  
 " Spirits. And this the rather, because they  
 " praise him after such a manner, that those  
 " who believe him such, as they represent him,  
 " will never be truly Christians, but *Photinians*  
 " Hereticks, since they will believe him only  
 " Man, and not God and Man together. So

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faciant laudatorem, ne velit esse Christianus. Ac sic quamvis  
 ab illo laudatus, ab istorum tamen dæmodum dominari eum  
 non liberet Christus: Præsertim quia ita laudant Christum,  
 ut quisquis in eum talem crediderit, qualis ab iis prædicatur,  
 Christianus verus non sit, sed Photinianus Hæreticus, qui  
 tantummodò hominem, non etiam Deum noverit Christum:  
 & ideo per eum salvus esse non possit, nec istorum mendaci-  
 loquorum dæmonum laqueos vitare vel solvere. Nos autem  
 neq; Apollinem vituperantem Christum, neq; Hecaten possumus  
 approbare laudantem. Ille quippe tanquam iniquum  
 Christum vult credi, quem à iudicibus recta sententibus di-  
 cit esse occisum; ista hominem piissimum, sed hominem  
 tantum. Una est tamen & illius & huius intentio, ut nolint  
 homines esse Christianos: quia nisi Christiani erunt, ab eo-  
 rum crui potestate non poterunt.

“ that they cannot be saved by his means, nor  
 “ disengage themselves from the snares of those  
 “ lying *Demons*. As for us, we receive neither  
 “ *Apollo* when he blames *Christ*, nor *Hecate*  
 “ when she commends him: for the former  
 “ would have us think, he was a wicked Person,  
 “ and justly condemn’d to dye; the latter, that  
 “ he was a pious Man, but nothing more. They  
 “ both have the same design, which is to hin-  
 “ der Men from becoming Christians, without  
 “ which they can never be deliver’d from the  
 “ dominion of these *Demons*.

St. *Augustin*, you see, believes these Oracles might have been forg’d by *Porphyry*, out of hatred to the Christian Religion: And you on the contrary believe, they might have been forg’d by the Christians, in favour of their Religion. St. *Augustin* finds nothing in them, but praises full of malice, and the Blasphemies of the Arch-Heretick *Photinus*: and you find in them most clear and positive Testimonies concerning the Person of *Christ*, concerning his Resurrection and Ascension; and such a multitude of proofs of Christianity, as bear down all before them. I leave all Men of sense to judge, which of the Two, You or St. *Augustin*, the Modern or the antient Author, has reason’d with most justness upon these Oracles, and best understood the true meaning of them.

CHAP IX. After this it is pleasant to hear you vend  
*Mr. De Fontenelle's new conjectures on the Book, and the Oracles of Porphyry.* your conjectures on these Oracles, and on the Book of *Porphyry* whence they were taken. *Eusebius*, \* you say, thought it an Advantage considerable enough, to be able to put *Porphyry's Name at the Head of so many Oracles, so favon-*

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\* Hist. ibid. p. 53.

nable to the true Religion. He gives them to us, depriv'd of all that accompany'd them in the Writings of Porphyry. How do we know, he did not confuse them? It was the interest of his Cause to have done it. I think, Sir, you ought to know by this time, first that Eusebius has not given us the Oracles he cites, so depriv'd as you say, of all that accompany'd them in the Writings of Porphyry; since he mentions some Reflections of this Philosopher on these Oracles, which shews us 2dly, That this Author did not confuse them, and that it was not the interest of his Cause to have done it, since as St. Augustin so evidently shews, they were so contrary to Christianity, and so injurious to Christ.

Immediately after you let loose the Reins to your imagination, and add, \* Porphyry is <sup>The confusion of all these vain Conjectures.</sup> *supposed to have been mischievous enough to make false Oracles, and present them to the Christians; on purpose to deride their credulity, if they receiv'd them as true, and built their Religion upon such Foundations.* It is plain, if Porphyry forg'd these Oracles, he did not do it to deride the Credulity of the Christians, but to overthrow their Religion, if he could, and to hinder the Heathens from embracing it, by shewing them, that the Gods spoke of it only as of a pernicious Error, and look'd upon the Christians only as Persons defil'd with all sorts of Crimes, and miserably abus'd. Besides, the Christians were far from founding their Religion upon any Oracles whatsoever. They were too well convinc'd, that they came from the Devil, whom they knew to be the Father of Lies, and their greatest Enemy: And as for those in question, it was too evident they only tended to

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\* Hist. ibid. p. 53, 54.

destroy their Religion. How then could they make use of them to uphold it? You see at least, that St. *Augustin* was not mistaken in them: And if *Eusebius* made use of them, it was not to prove the Divinity, Resurrection, or Ascension of Christ: For where could he see all those mysteries in these Oracles? but only to shew, by the Concession of *Porphry* himself, that our Saviour was no Impostor, as some were bold enough to assert.

\* *It might therefore very well be (say you a little after) that Porphry put all the Mysteries of our Religion into Oracles, on purpose to discredit them.* One sees you are still under a strong persuasion, that this Philosopher has related a great many Oracles most clear and positive, concerning the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ; from whence you very wisely conjecture, that he might probably have thus put into Oracles all the other Mysteries of Christianity. If the conjecture be not solid, it is at least diverting. What a fine thing were our Religion put into Oracles by *Porphry*? In truth, Sir, if you had taken the pains to read *Eusebius* and St. *Augustin* with a little more attention, you would not have rov'd into all these

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<sup>1</sup> The Title of the Chapter, Demonstr. Evang. Lib. 3., where Eusebius relates the Oracles of Porphry, of which we are speaking, is this: Προς τοῦ οἰκόμενου γόνῃα γερονέειν ἃ Χριστὸν ἢ Θεῷ. Afterwards, having refuted this Calumny by a great many very good Arguments, and by these very Oracles, he immediately adds, *ibid.* p. 134. Ἄρ' ἐν ἀπασι τοῖς ἁγίοις; καὶ τὰ φίλα ἢ δυνάμει τοῦ οἰκείου ῥήματος. ἔχει τοῖς ἁγίοις ἢ ἡμετέροις Σωτήρα Ἰησοῦν ἢ Χριστὸν ἢ Θεῷ, καὶ ὅσα τοῖς ἑαυτοῖς (decisse videtur ἐχθροῖς) ἀπολογησάμενον ἐ γόνῃα καὶ φαρμακία, ἀλλ' ἀνσεβῆ καὶ δικαιοτάτον καὶ ἁγίον καὶ θρανίων ἀφίδων οἰκίτορα.

\* Hist. *ibid.* p. 54.

conjectures so unworthy a Man of your Sense. Vouchsafe at least to consider them now, and you'll find without difficulty, that all you say about the Oracles, and the Book of *Porphyry*, is nothing but *chimera*, which the bare reading of what we have left of the Works of that Philosopher does absolutely overthrow and destroy.

It is time to examine the second Reason, on CHAP. X. which you say the Primitive Christians believ'd, The second Reason father'd on the Primitive Christians: the suitableness of their Opinion to the System of Christianity. that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils. You take it from the suitableness of that Opinion to the System of Christianity. Your words are these. \* *The existence of Devils being once granted by the Christians, it was natural to suppose them as much employ'd as possible, and that they had little leisure from giving Oracles, and performing those other Miracles, wherein the Heathens seem'd to have occasion for them. So that when the Fathers maintain'd, that Heathen Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, they did it in your Opinion, only to give the Devils some employment, and not let them lie idle; a grievous inconvenience, and of much prejudice to the Christian Religion, and which consequently they were oblig'd to remedy. This is an excellent reason without doubt, and worthy of all these great Men, upon whom you father it. 'Tis pity that among those which Origen, Eusebius, and Theodoret bring, to maintain their Opinion, they never thought of this. Undoubtedly they would not have omitted it. This reason had been decisive and convincing. But do not you own, Sir, with them, and with all the Church, that the Devils are incessantly*

\* Hist. Diss. i. c. 2. p. 20.

'occupy'd in tempting Men and laying Snares for them? Do not you own with them, that they have a hand in all the effects of Magick? Was not this sufficient to employ them? What need was there to make them deliver Oracles, if the only concern was to find them business, and not to suffer them to lie idle?

*The Fathers were incapable of maintaining an Opinion, which they thought false; and very capable of entering into the most difficult Disquisitions.*

\* *Hereby, you add, they excus'd themselves from entering into the examination of the Matter of Fact, which would have been tedious and difficult; and all that was surprizing and extraordinary in Oracles they father'd upon these Dæmons, which they had at their command.* The meaning of that is, if I do not mistake, that the Fathers did not love difficult Disquisitions, and that, to avoid entering into them, they without ceremony advanc'd many Fables, and known Falshoods. They well knew, that Devils were not the Authors of Oracles, yet to avoid the Trouble, and free themselves as soon as possible from the Perplexity, that was given them by what was surprizing and extraordinary in Oracles, they maintain'd it, and endeavour'd to persuade all the World of it, tho' at the bottom they believ'd nothing of it themselves. You see what a very strange *Idea* you there give us of the Holy Fathers. But certainly it is not the same we have of them, when we read their Works, and know something of the History of their Lives. This latter informs us, that they were incapable of advancing and maintaining such Falshoods against their Conscience, and against the Law of God, which forbids it. To suspect them of the contrary is doing a heinous Injury to them: And their Works evidently

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. v. 8.    2 Cor. xi. 14, &c.

\* Hist. *ibid.* p. 20, 21.

show us, that they were not afraid of entering into an infinite number of very difficult and knotty Disquisitions, what in writing against the Heathens, and confuting the antient Hereticks. You need only turn over their Books to be convinc'd of it.

But to return to what you say. Was it more difficult in your opinion, to impute all that was surprizing in Oracles to the Impostures of Idolatrous Priests, than to their *Demons*? was it necessary for this to enter into a longer and more difficult examination of Facts? This does not appear. On the contrary this latter way was without doubt much more easie, and more proper to ridicule the Heathen Religion. The Fathers were not ignorant of this, as you have observ'd in *Origen* and *Eusebium*. Nay 'tis only upon the conjectures, with which the latter has furnish'd you, that you have grounded your Paradox of the Impostures of the Idolatrous Priests, as you own your self. Why then did they not stick to this method, which was so easie, and so proper to confound Idolaters, and with which they were so perfectly acquainted? Why did they forsake it, but that they judg'd it false, unwarrantable, and far from even the appearance of Truth! They were convinc'd beyond possibility of doubting of it, by a very great number of Reasons, Experiences, and evident Authorities, that the most part of the Heathen Oracles were in reality Impostures and Illusions of Devils; and to prove it to the Idolaters, they were not afraid to enter into so difficult a Disquisition, as that of the good and

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\* As *Origen*. contra Celsum, & contra Marcionitas. *St. Irenaeus* & *Tertull.* contr. Valentinos, & alios Hæreticos. *Euseb.* Pr. Evang. & contr. Marcell. Ancy. &c.

evil Spirits, \* and the Marks by which they might be distinguish'd. A Disquisition, I say, very long and difficult, of which they would have spar'd themselves the pains, if they had believ'd, that Oracles were only cheats of Idolatrous Priests.

*The overthrow of the worship of Devils, of Idolatry, and of Oracles was truly the Work of our Saviour.*

You add, That \* it is certain, that towards the time of the Birth of Christ there was frequent mention of the Cessation of Oracles, even in profane Authors. No doubt this deserves some consideration; and the rather, because till then there had been no such extraordinary Event ever heard of. Why, say you, was that time rather destin'd for abolishing them than any other? Nothing was more easie to explain according to the System of the Christian Religion. God had made the Jews his People, and had left to Devils the Government of all the Earth besides, till the coming of his Son. But then he divests them of that power he had permitted them to usurp. He will have all submit to Christ, and nothing oppose the establishment of his Kingdom over the Nations. There is, say you, something so happy in this thought, that I don't wonder if it was very current. There is not only something happy in this thought, but the whole of it is solid and true; except that the manner of your expressing it is not just. What, Sir, is it not true, that before the Birth of Christ almost all the Earth was

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\* Eusebius employs in this Disquisition three whole Books of his Work de Præparatione Evangelicâ, the 4th, 5th, and 6th, the proofs of which he also recapitulates in his 5th Book de Demonstratione. It also makes a great part of the Apologies of Terrullian and Athenagoras. St. Augustin treats this Subject at large in his 8th, 9th, and 10th Books de Civitate Dei: not to mention his Treatise de Divinatione Dæmonum, written on purpose to explain an Oracle pronounc'd by Serapis.

\* Hist. ibid. p. 21, 22.

plung'd in the darkness of Idolatry, and of the worship of Devils? Is it not likewise undoubtedly true, that it was our Saviour overthrow this abominable Worship, and consequently Oracles, which had contributed more than any thing to establish it every where? Did not the Prophets <sup>v</sup> foretel this great Event concerning him? And do not we see with our own Eyes their Prophecies accomplish'd? How then can you take pains to diminish the Glory of it, by endeavouring to persuade us, that he had no part in it, or that all he did was only to undeceive some of the gross Cheats of other Men?

But in the Chapter where you answer this 2d CHAP. XI.  
Reason, which you father upon the Primitive Christians, you say, That <sup>Of the pretended silence of the Scripture concerning those evil Spirits</sup> ~~the silence of the Scripture concerning these evil Spirits pretended to have presided over Oracles, does not only leave us at liberty to believe nothing of it, but naturally inclines us to such a Belief.~~ So that you account as nothing the most ancient and most constant Tradition, and except you are plainly

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<sup>v</sup> Isai. ii. 11. The lofty looks of Man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of Men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. V. 18. And the Idols be shall utterly abolish. V. 20. In that day a Man shall cast his Idols of silver, and his Idols of gold, which they made, each one for himself to worship, to the Moles, and to the Bats. Id. c. xvii. 7, 8. At that day shall a Man look to his Maker, and his Eyes shall have respect to the holy one of Israel. And he shall not look to the Altars, the work of his Hands, neither shall respect that which his Fingers have made (either the Groves or the Images). Zechar. xiii. 1, 2. In that day there shall be a Fountain opened to the House of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem — And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will cut off the Names of the Idols out of the Land, and they shall no more be remembered.

\* Hist. Diss. l. ch. 5. p. 571.

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shew'd all the Usages and all the Opinions of the Church clearly express'd in the Scripture, you think your self at liberty to believe nothing of them; nay sufficiently warranted to reject them. Don't you see whither this Principle leads you? and the consequences which may be drawn from it, against the Purity and Integrity of your Faith? Yet God forbid, I should draw these consequences. I do, and ever shall believe you a very good Catholick, and very firm to all the Traditions of the Church; I am only concern'd, that the ill-digested Learning of Mr. *Van-Dale* has hinder'd you from considering the Consequences of his System, which tends directly to overthrow the Authority of the Fathers, and subvert the most constant and best grounded Traditions: And assuredly if there be any Tradition, which is certain and constant, 'tis that here in question, since it is maintain'd and attested by all the Fathers, and by the Ecclesiastical Writers of all Ages, who have universally own'd the Devil for the Author of Idolatry in general, and of Oracles in particular; there being not so much as one of them, who has not spoke of him in this Sense, or has given occasion to be suspected of having been of a contrary Opinion: Yet on the sole Authority of Mr. *Van-Dale*, you reject this Tradition so constantly receiv'd by all Christians, and will have it pass for a ridiculous Prejudice, and a gross Illusion. I see by that, how dangerous it is to Copy the Books of Hereticks, and adopt their Opinions in Matters that have any relation to Religion. When a Man follows such ill Guides, it is almost impossible not to err: They lead him always farther than he imagines, and generally into some Precipice, which he does not discover till he is fallen into it.

*Tho' the Scripture were silent herein, yet the constant Tradition of the Church would be sufficient to convince us of this Truth.*

It. I have often observ'd, that they never fail to lay some Snare for the Catholicks, even in those Books, where in appearance they treat of nothing less than of Religion.

But to return from this Digression. I am so far from agreeing with you, that the Scripture is silent concerning the Devils who presidid over Oracles, that on the contrary I maintain, it teaches, and naturally leads us to believe *The Scripture naturally leads us to believe it.* this Truth: For indeed does it not plainly tell us, that all the Gods of the Heathens <sup>are</sup> Devils? Does it not assure us, that all which they sacrifice to their Idols, they sacrifice <sup>to</sup> Devils? Does it not reprove the *Israelites* <sup>for</sup> offering their Children to Devils, in offering them to the Idols of the *Ammonites*? Does not all this, and many other like passages teach us, that in reality the Devil had a hand in the greatest part of the Heathen superstitions? And if there be any one of those, which ought to be particularly attributed to him, and in which his Operation may appear more sensibly, it is certainly in that of Oracles. Does not the same Scripture tell us, that the false Prophets *The false Prophets of Ahab* <sup>of King Ahab</sup> were inspir'd by a lying Spirit, which spoke by their Mouth, and made them deliver false Oracles, and false Predictions con- <sup>inspir'd by the Devil, like those that deliver'd Oracles among the Heathens.</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Psal. xcvi. 5. For all the Gods of the Nations are Idols, Omnes Dii Gentium Dæmonia.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 20. The Things which the Gentiles Sacrifice, they Sacrifice to Devils and not to God: And I would not that ye should have fellowship with Devils.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xxxii. 17. They sacrific'd unto Devils, not to God. And Psal. cvi. 37. Yea, they sacrific'd their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Kin. xxii. 22. I will go forth, and I will be a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all his Prophets. And v. 23. Now therefore behold the Lord hath put a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all these thy Prophets.

cerning the Success of the Battel, that Prince was just going to Fight with the Syrians? Does not this lead us to believe, that the Prophets and Prophetesses of the Heathens, who deliver'd the Oracles of Delphos, of Claras, and of Dodona, were also inspir'd by the same lying Spirit, that is to say, by the Devil? For what difference can you find between one and t'other, which should have exempted these latter from the Illusions of the Devil?

*An Oracle in all it's circumstances related in the Scripture, and ascrib'd to the Devil.*

It may be you desire for your Conviction, to see an Oracle in the Scripture still more like to those of the Heathen, over which we may, by the Testimony of the same Scripture be assur'd, that the Devil did preside. And was not the Oracle of Beelzebub<sup>b</sup> that was at Accaron, which Achizah King of Israel sent to consult to know if he should recover of his illness, an Oracle perfectly like those of the Greeks, seeing it was consulted about things to come, and gave answers like them? Or can you doubt whether the Devil was the Author of this Oracle, since the Gospel teaches us, that Beelzebub was a Devil, and even the Prince of the Devils? And since the Scripture informs us, that the Devil presided over this Oracle, does not it carry us naturally to believe, that the other Oracles, which then were, or have been since among the Gen-

<sup>a</sup> 2 Km. i. 2. Go, enquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron, whether I shall recover of this disease. And v. 16. Forasmuch as thou hast sent Messengers to enquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word?

<sup>b</sup> Matt. xii. 24. This Fellow does not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils. And v. 27. And if I by Beelzebub cast out Devils, by whom do your Children cast them out?

tiles, had likewise Devils for their Authors? Tell us therefore no more, that \* if Oracles had been deliver'd by Devils, God would have inform'd us of it, to hinder us from believing, that he deliver'd them himself, and that there was something divine in false Religions? Since you see by these Instances, and by what the Scripture also teaches us elsewhere, concerning the Deities which the Gentiles worship'd, that it has inform'd us clearly enough, what we ought to think of them.

† David, you say, reproaches the Heathen, that **CHAP. XII.**  
*their Gods have Mouths and speak not, and all the* *The Confutation*  
*Punishment he wishes those that worship'd them, of a ridiculous*  
*is that they might be like the Gods they worship'd; Mistake falsely*  
*But if these Gods had not only had the use of Speech, ascrib'd to the*  
*Fathers.*  
*but also the knowledge of Things to come, I do not*  
*see how David could have thus reproach'd the Hea-*  
*thens, or that they ought to have been pleas'd at*  
*being like their Gods. David had reason to re-*  
*proach the Heathens, since in truth the Idols*  
*they worship'd, were nothing but dumb and*  
*lifeless Images; and the Fathers who believ'd,*  
*that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, did not*  
*therefore believe, as you imagine, that Idols*  
*had the use of Speech; much less, the knowledge*  
*of Things to come. They knew, that the Idols*  
*did not deliver Oracles; but the Priests and*  
*Priestesses, whom the Devils that joyn'd them-*  
*selves to these Idols, and frequented these Tem-*  
*ples, made speak and prophecy at random, by*  
*filling them with that fury they call'd Divine,*  
*and causing them to make the same Grimaces*  
*and Contorsions, which we see in those that*

\* Hist. libd. p. 58.

† Hist. libd. p. 58, 59.

are really possess'd. They have all spoke of them after this manner, and have perfectly well distinguish'd between the Idols and the Idolatrous Priests; two Things in reality very different, which you confound, in attributing to the former, what only belongs to, and only can agree with the latter. Hear among others how *Theodore* <sup>d</sup> speaks of them, when he explains this very passage of *David*, which you cite, "Because the Devils, says this Father, who by the means of Idols seduc'd the Gentiles, and gave them false Oracles, did not deliver them by these inanimate Images, but by rational Men, and by other means, for this reason *David* says, that these Idols speak not, for they are indeed Images without motion or life. *David* therefore has reason to upbraid the Gods of the Gentiles, that they have Mouths and speak not: But it is ridiculous to conclude from thence, that Devils were not the Authors of Oracles, as if it had been by Images, and not by Men, that they deliver'd them. That is a Mistake which I wonder you fell into, since there is no Author that speaks of Oracles, and of the manner in which they were utter'd, but what might have undeceiv'd you. A Mistake however, on which you have built a good part of your System, as we shall see in the sequel of this Discourse.

The Fathers were never of another Opinion: but always

made a great difference between the Idols and the Idolatrous Priests.

\* When the Holy Fathers, as you go on, are so justly angry with the worship of Idols, they still sup-

<sup>d</sup> Theodorit. Interpret. in Psal. cxiii. v. 16. p. 863. Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ οἱ δι' αὐτῶν ἐκπορεύεις δαίμονες καὶ τὰ ἱδωδὶς χερσὶ μαρτύρια, καὶ διὰ τῶν εἰδωλῶν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῶν λογικῶν ἀνθρώπων προσέφερον, καὶ διὰ συμβουλῶν τινῶν καθεμινύον, εἰκότως εἶπεν, καὶ φωνήσουσιν ἐν τοῖς λαοῦσι αὐτῶν: ἀκίνητα γὰρ καὶ ἀλογα εἰδωλα παρὰ τὰς.

† Hist. ibid. p. 59.

pose these Idols able to do nothing. That is true, and they never spoke otherwise of them. But as for the Idolatrous Priests who deliver'd Oracles, they taught and maintain'd, that they were inspir'd or possess'd with the Devil: That it was this evil Spirit, who was Author of all the Superstitions of Paganism, and of all the false Miracles to be seen therein. This is what the Fathers always suppos'd: This is what they prov'd very fully in their Writings, by constantly distinguishing the Idols consider'd in themselves, from the Idolatrous Priests. This you might easily observe in *Lactantius*, <sup>c</sup> *Athenagoras*, <sup>f</sup> *Minutius Felix*, <sup>g</sup> and *Tertullian*, <sup>h</sup> who at the same time that they shew, that Idols are able to do nothing, maintain that the Devils, who presid'd over Oracles and Idols, both could and in reality did do very much mischief by their Imposture and Delusion.

You pursue your Argument against the Fathers, and say, \* *But if Idols had spoke, if they had foretold things to come, it was not fit to condemn their weakness.* And why might not they

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\* Here is an Epitome of what *Lactantius* teaches in the two first Books of his *Institutions*. *Docui Religiones Deorum triplici ratione vanas esse: Una, quod simulacra ipsa, quæ coluntur, effigies sicut hominum mortuorum — Altera, quod ipsæ imagines sacræ, quibus vanissimi homines serviunt, omni sensu carent, quoniam terra sunt — Tertia, quod Spiritus, qui præsent ipsi Religionibus, condemnati & abjecti à Deo per Terram volutentur; qui non tantum nihil præstare cultoribus suis possint, quoniam rerum potestas penes unum est, verum etiam mortiferis eos illecebris & erroribus perdant: Quoniam hoc illis quotidianum est opus, tenebras hominibus obducere, ne quærat ab illis verus Deus.* *Lactant. L. ii. c. 17.*

<sup>f</sup> *Athenagoras in Apol.*

<sup>g</sup> *Minutius Felix in Octavio.*

<sup>h</sup> *Tertull. in Apolog.*

\* *Hist. ibid.*

do it, even upon this supposition? Would the Idols have ceas'd upon this account to be so many pieces of Wood, or Stone, or Metal? But before you reason'd thus, you should have told us, which of the Fathers believ'd or suppos'd, that Idols spoke, and foretold things to come: For of all those I have read, I have not found one, that has had so false a Notion, or has given any handle to have that charg'd upon him. They knew very well, what you seem to be ignorant of, that it was not the Images, but the Idolatrous Priests, who spoke and took upon them, to foretel things to come. Yet 'tis upon this false Supposition, you undertake to prove, that in the Opinion of the Fathers, \* *Paganism would have been only an involuntary and an excusable Error*: for, you add a little after, † *my understanding is sufficient to examine, whether an Image speaks or not, but from the first Moment it speaks nothing can more satisfy me of the Divinity I ascribe to it*. I know not whether you will find many like you in this, even among the simplest and most grossly Ignorant. As for me, I confess I should see all the Images in the World speak, without ascribing any Divinity to them on this account. But I tell you once more, it was Men, and not Images, that deliver'd the Heathen Oracles.

*The Devils do not know things to come.*

In your arguing you also make another supposition, which is no less false than the former. It is this, that if the Devils had deliver'd their Oracles by Images, as you fancy the Fathers believ'd, ‡ *Those Images would not only have spoke, but have also foretold things to come*: And as you

\* Hist. ibid. p. 61.

† Hist. ibid. p. 62.

‡ Hist. ibid. p. 59.

said a little before, these Gods which accord-  
ing to *David*, have Mouths and speak not,  
\* would have had not only the use of Speech, but  
also the knowledge of Futurity. All which shews  
clearly, that you believe Devils know certainly  
what is to come. But this is a mistake, of which  
the Fathers & might have undeceiv'd you in  
those

\* Hist. ibid.

Tertull. in Apolog. cap. 22. p. 22. Omnis Spiritus ales,  
hoc & Angeli & Dæmones. Igitur momento ubiq; sunt. Totus  
orbis illis locus amicus est. Quid ubi generat tam facile sciunt,  
quàm enunciant: Velocitas divinitas creditur, quia subsan-  
tia ignoratur. Sic & Authores interdum videri volunt eo-  
rum, quæ annuntiant, & sunt planè malorum nonnunquam,  
bonorum tamen nunquam. Emulatur divinitatem; dum  
furantur divinationem. Minimus Felix in Octavio. p. 248.  
Oracula efficitur falsis plaribus involuta; nam & falluntur &  
fallunt, ut & nescientes sinceram veritatem, & quam sciunt  
in perditionem sui non contentes.

August. L. De Divin. Dæmonum. cap. 5. p. 600. Quæ cum  
ita sit; primum sciendum est, quoniam de divinatione Dæ-  
monum quæstio est, illos ea plerumq; prænuntiare, quæ ipsi  
facturi sunt. Accipiunt enim sæpè potestatem & morbos  
immittere, & ipsum aërem vitando morbidum reddere.—  
Aliquando autem non quæ ipsi faciunt, sed quæ naturalibus  
signis futura prænoscent, quæ signa in hominùm sensus ve-  
nire non possunt, ante prædicunt.—Aliquando & hominùm  
dispositiones non solum voce prolata, verum etiam cogitati-  
one conceptas, cum signa quædam ex animo exprimuntur in  
corpore, totà facilitate perdiscunt, atq; hinc etiam multa  
futura prænuntiant. Id. c. 6. In cæteris autem prædictioni-  
bus suis dæmones plerumq; & falluntur & fallunt: Falluntur  
quidem, quia cum suas dispositiones prænuntiant, ex impro-  
viso desuper aliquid juberetur, quod eorum consiliis cuncta  
perturbet.—Fallunt autem etiam studia fallendi, & invidia  
voluntate, quæ hominùm errore lærantur. Sed ne apud cul-  
tores suos pondus Auctoritatis amittant, id agunt, ut inter-  
pretibus suis, signorumq; suorum conjectoribus culpa tribua-  
tur, quando vel decepti fuerint, vel alieni.

Athanasius in vita S. Antonii. p. 470. Οὐδὲν γὰρ τὸ μὴ  
ἰσχυρίζεσθαι τὴν ἀληθείαν· ἀλλὰ μὴ τὸ ἀδύνατον εἶναι τὴν ἀλήθειαν  
γινώσκοντες τὴν ψευδῆσιν αὐτῶν. p. 471. Οὐκ ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας τῆς  
ἐξ

those very places where they teach, that Devils are the Authors of Oracles: For they all there affirm, that these evil Spirits know nothing of future Events, especially of such as depend on free or contingent Causes; that they only fore-tel in one place what they have seen in another; or the mischief they have resolv'd to do; or their desisting from what they have done; and that they only seek to deceive; that all their Predictions are only Lies or Conjectures at the most: And lastly, that the certain knowledge of what is Future belongs only to God. This is at the same time the Doctrine of all the Divinity \* that is founded on the holy Scripture: Which being so, the conclusion you draw again from this false supposition, is also false: And that is, That in the System of Oracles deliver'd by Devils, Paganism had been only an involuntary and an excusable Error: Which is so false, that tho' even your two Suppositions were true, this consequence you draw from them would for all that be false, by reason that a thousand other circumstances, which are to be found in Oracles, did evidently shew that it was not God, nor any good Spirit, but Devils who deliver'd them.

*Paganism could not in any wise be an involuntary and an excusable Error.*

### CHAP. XIII

*The 3d Reason ascrib'd to the Primitive*

*Christians; the suitableness of their Opinion to the Philosophy of Plato.*

I come now to the 3d Reason, for which you pretend the Primitive Christians believ'd,

Ἐλλήνων μαθηταί, καὶ ὅπως ἐπλανήθησιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τῆς δαίμωνιον τοῦ πνεύματος· ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅταν πνεύματι λαλοῦν ἢ ψάλλειν· λαβεῖν γὰρ ὁ κύριος ὁ κυριεύων αὐτῇ τῇ πανουργίᾳ αὐτοῦ, καὶ τοῦ δαίμονος καταργήσας· ἐδὲν γὰρ γνωσκουσιν ἀπ' ἐαυτῶν· ἀλλ' ὡς καὶ πρὸς ἄλλους ὁρᾷ, ταῦτα διαβάλλουσιν· καὶ μᾶλλον σοφασάμενοι, ἢ πνευμονόεσται.

\* D. Thom. P. i. Q. 57. Art. 3.

1 Isa. xli. 23. *Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods.*

that

that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils. It is, you say, because \* of the *suitableness* of that Opinion to the Philosophy of Plato. Upon this you say many things, that appear to me no less extraordinary, than those you have hitherto advanced. † Never, say you, was any Philosophy *The Historian* more in fashion than was that of Plato among Christians during the first Ages of the Church. *asserts, that* Heathens still divided themselves among the different Sects of Philosophers: *Learned among the Primitive Christians were* But the conformity which *Platonists.* Men found Platonism had with the true Religion, brought almost all the learned Christians into this one Sect. This sure enough is new. It is no longer Justin, Pantenus, Aristides, Athenagoras, and a great number of other Philosophers that quit their Sects to embrace Christianity, as we have hitherto believ'd; but 'tis they, and almost all the other learned Christians of the first Ages, that forsake Christianity to follow the Sect of Plato; or that make a frightful mixture of the Opinions, and of the Doctrine of the Gospel, with the Errors of this Heathen Philosopher. Thus they teach with him Plurality of Gods, Transmigration of Souls, Community of Wives, Homicide, and many other detestable Errors. There is nothing to be added, but that it was to maintain Plato's Philosophy, that they wrote so many Books and Apologies, endur'd so many Persecutions, underwent so many Torments, and at last gave up their Lives in the midst of the most cruel Punishments.

|| From thence, say you, came the great esteem *Those strange* they conceiv'd for Plato; they look'd upon him as a *Notions he vends upon this Subject confuted.*

\* Hist. Dissert. 1. ch. 3, p. 23.

† Hist. ibid.

|| Hist. ibid. p. 23, 24.

kind of Prophet—accordingly they did not scruple to take his Works for Commentaries on the Scripture; and to apprehend the nature of the Word as he apprehended it. But were the Primitive Christians infatuated with *Plato* to that degree, as to look upon him as a kind of Prophet, and to take his Works for Commentaries on the Scripture? We are then very unhappy to have embrac'd the Belief of the Primitive Christians. How great danger was there, that instead of transmitting to us the Doctrine of Christ and the Apostles, they had given us only the Notions and Errors of *Plato*? How dare we read their Books after this, to learn our Religion there? How can the Council of *Trent*<sup>m</sup> enjoin, That in the Explication of the Holy Scripture, we should follow the unanimous Opinion of the Fathers, since almost all of them were possess'd with the Doctrine of *Plato*; and took his Books for Commentaries on the Scripture? What joy must it be for the *Socinians*, to hear a Catholic, a Man of Parts and Reputation, speak after a manner so agreeable to their Notions? Indeed could the Author of *Platonism unveil'd*, as much a declar'd *Socinian* as he is, express himself upon this Subject in a stile more significant or more daring?

The Primitive Christians and the Fathers were so far from embracing the Sect of *Plato*, that they strenuously oppos'd his Errors.

But pray let us know, Sir, who these Primitive Christians are, of whom you speak, and in whom you have observ'd this prodigious Passion for *Plato*? *Eusebius* in his Book *de Preparatione Evangelica*<sup>n</sup> very prolixly expounds the Reasons, that Christians had to reject all the Sects of Philosophers, without excepting that of *Plato*, whose Errors he relates, and at

<sup>m</sup> Conc. Trid. Sess. 4.

<sup>n</sup> *Euseb. L. 13. Præp. Evang. cap. 15, 16, & sequentibus*  
large

large confutes; and particularly that concerning *Demons*. *Justin Martyr*, to prove the same thing, makes a long enumeration of the Contradictions of the Philosophers; and in particular of those of *Plato*, whose Doctrine he has in another place so openly profess'd to forsake, to follow that of the Prophets and Apostles. *Lactantius* having in the two first Books of his *Institutions* confuted the Pagan Superstitions, does in his Third confute the Errors of the Philosophers, and particularly those of *Plato*; and shews, that none of them knew the Truth; that they were all mistaken; and that to obtain the real Happiness of the Soul, the true Wisdom, there is no other side to be taken, but that which he maintains and defends. *St. Augustin* chose out the Platonists from among all the other Philosophers, to confute them in his Book *De Civitate Dei*: And having commended them in those he wrote against the Academists, he disallows these praises in his *Retractions*, saying, That he ought not to have given them to wicked Men, against the Errors of whom we are oblig'd to defend the true Religion. *Theodoret* relates the strange Mistakes of *Plato*, and shews, That in his Books he has taught and warranted the greatest and most infamous Crimes. And

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\* Justin. Cohort. ad Græcos.

\* In Apol. 1. & in Dial. cum Tryph.

\* Lactant. L. iii. de Falsa Sapient.

\* August. L. vii, 9, 10. de Civit. Dei.

\* Idem Retract. L. i. cap. 1. p. 3. *Lata quod, ipsa, quæ Platonem vel Platonicos sive Academicos Philosophos tantum extuli, quantum impios homines non oportuit, non immerito mihi displicuit, præsertim contra quorum errores magis defendenda est Christiana doctrina.*

\* Theodoret. L. de Græc. affect. cur. Serm. 9, de Legibus.

*Epiphanius* in his *Treatise of Heresies* <sup>a</sup>, ranges Platonism among those Sects of the Heathens, which were fallen into the greatest Errors, and of which the Christians always had as much abhorrence as of Paganism its self. You say, that almost all the Learned Primitive Christians embrac'd the Sect of *Plato*; and I will justify, that there is not so much as one of all those, whose Works are now left us, who did not professedly reject *Plato* and his Philosophy, to keep wholly to *Jesus Christ* and his Doctrine.

CHAP. XIV.  
What the Fathers thought of *Plato*, with respect to the other Heathen Philosophers.

It is true, when the Fathers compar'd the Heathen Philosophers with one another, they gave the preference to *Plato*, as to him, whose Philosophy <sup>b</sup> was in some points least different from the Doctrines of Christianity. But they were not therefore Platonists: They did not take his Works for *Commentaries* on the Holy Scripture; which had been an error, and an extravagance, whereof I can hardly believe the most foolish of the Hereticks could have been capable. The Primitive Christians well knew, what the Apostle *St. Paul* has advis'd <sup>c</sup> upon this subject, and what is not unknown, if we may credit *St. Augustin*, <sup>d</sup> even to the most simple

<sup>a</sup> *Epiphani. L. i. adv. Hæreses. Hæresi 6, quæ est Platoniorum.*

<sup>b</sup> *August. L. viii. de Civ. D.*

<sup>c</sup> *Coloss. ii. 8. Beware lest any Man spoil you thro' Philosophy and vain Deceits, after the Tradition of Men, after the Ruminations of the World, and not after Christ.*

<sup>d</sup> *August. L. viii. de Civit. Dei. c. 9. p. 241. Quamvis enim homo Christianus literis tantum Ecclesiasticis eruditus, Platoniorum fortè nomen ignoret, nec utrum duo genera Philosophorum extiterint in Græcâ linguâ, Ionicorum & Italicorum, sciat, non tamen ita surdus est in rebus humanis, ut nesciat*

ple Believers, which is, that we beware least any one deceive us, by reasonings of false Philosophy, which comes from the tradition of Men, and is only founded upon the Elements of humane Science, and not upon *Jesus Christ*.

But if what you say of the prodigious esteem for *Plato*, with which most of the Primitive Christians were infatuated, only respects some Hereticks, who err'd in following this Philosopher, as the Fathers<sup>2</sup> informs us: I answer: 1<sup>st</sup>, That you ought not then to express your self so generally, as you have done, in saying that almost all the learned Christians were possess'd with Platonism: For this way of speaking comprehends the Fathers, and the Orthodox Writers, as much and more than the Hereticks. 2<sup>dly</sup>, That your Proposition, thus restrain'd to some Hereticks, is no longer of any force, nor has any more relation to our Subject: Since the question is not, what the antient He-

*There were Hereticks, that err'd by following this Philosopher: But the Question here is not, what Hereticks believ'd concerning Oracles.*

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nesciat Philosophos vel studium sapientiz, vel ipsam sapientiam profiteri. Cavet eos tamen, qui secundum elementa hujus mundi Philosophantur, non secundum Deum, à quo ipse factus est mundus. Admonetur enim præcepto Apostolico, fideliterq; audit quod dictum est: Cavete nequis vos decipiat per philosophiam, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Tertull. L. de Præscript. adversus Hæret: Cap. 7. p. 204. 205. Ipsæ deniq; hæreses à Philosophiâ subornantur. Inde Æones, & formæ. nescio quæ, & trinitas hominis apud Valentinum. Platonius fuerat — Quid ergo Athenis & Hierosolymis? Quid Academiæ & Ecclesiæ? Quid Hæreticis & Christianis? Nostra institutio de porticu Salomonis est. — Viderint qui Stoicum & Platicum & Dialecticum Christianismum protrulerunt. Idem L. de Anima. Cap. 23. p. 286. Doleo bonâ fide Platonem omnium hæreticorum condimentarium factum. Irenæus L. 2. cap. 19. Quod autem dicunt (Valentiniani) imagines esse hæc eorum quæ sunt rur. us manifestissimè Democriti & Platonis sententiam edificant.

reticks

reticks thought of Oracles, but what the Fathers have taught us concerning them, and what opinion the Primitive Christians had of them. 3dly, That even tho' some Hereticks, or some Author, suspected, as *Origen*, to have been too much addicted to *Plato*, did believe, as all the rest, that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, it does not follow, that they maintain'd this Opinion, because it was conformable to the Doctrine of this Philosopher, or that they learn'd it from him, or lastly, that it is false, as you pretend.

*Mr. de Fontenelle cannot justify his extravagant Expressions by the example of some famous Authors.*

I add, that if to justify your extravagant Expressions upon this Subject, you alledge what some celebrated Authors had advanc'd concerning the *Platonism* of the Fathers, who liv'd before the Council of *Nice*, I may answer you: 1st, That they did not carry things so far, as you do. 2dly, That they brought no Proofs of what they said. 3dly, That this is by no means what has been most approv'd in their Writings, or what most deserves Approbation.

*What he must do, if he undertakes to make them good.*

4ly, That to make good your Proposition, you ought by an exact Parallel to shew the Conformity of the Opinions of the Primitive Christians with those of *Plato*, in most points of their Doctrine; and to produce the Passages of their Works, where they have profess'd to follow this Philosopher, as I have pointed you out some of those, where they absolutely reject him; and where they strenuously oppose his Errours. Now this is what I don't think either you or Mr. *Van-Dale* can ever do.

*'Tis in vain that he refutes the Opinion of Plato concerning Dæmons, since the Primitive Christians*

After having propos'd this 3d Reason, drawn from the Suitableness of the Opinion of the Primitive Christians, concerning Oracles, to the Philosophy of *Plato*, you set your self to confute

confute it, by shewing, \* *that the existence of* <sup>did not learn</sup> *Dæmons is not sufficiently prov'd by Platonism,* <sup>the existence of</sup> *and that Plato himself was not thoroughly per-* <sup>Devils from</sup> *suaded of it. Without observing to you by* <sup>him.</sup> *the way, what contradiction there is between what you say there, and what you have said hitherto, I willingly grant you all you advance upon this Subject. But this makes little to our question. Was it of Plato that the Primitive Christians learn'd the existence of Devils, their Malice and the desire they have to destroy Mankind? Are not you sensible that the Scripture teaches all this very clearly? Did you hope that by diverting your self with the Stories, which Plato, Hesiod and Plutarch relate of their Demons, you should overthrow what the Scripture and the Christian Faith teaches, concerning these evil Spirits? This is what I cannot persuade my self of.*

Acknowledge therefore, Sir, that this Reason and the Two preceding, which you have father'd upon the Primitive Christians, and for which you pretend they believ'd, that the Heathen Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, are but *Chimera's* of which they never thought, and which you have only invented, to dispute against their Opinion with more ease. Give me leave to these false Reasons to add Three others, which did really persuade them, and which I have taken out of their Writings.

The first of these Reasons is the Authority of **CHAP. XV.** Holy Scripture, which as I have already ob- <sup>The first true</sup> *serv'd to you, taught them very clearly, what* <sup>Reason which</sup> *they should believe concerning Oracles and their* <sup>persuaded the</sup> *Primitive*

*Christians :*  
*The Authority*  
*of Holy Scrip-*  
*ture which*

\* Hist. Diss. 1. c. 6. p. 68.

affirms, that  
all the Heathen  
Deities were  
Devils.

Authors. Indeed *Eusebius*, \* who has treated this Subject most at large, grounds his Opinion on the same Passages of Scripture that I have cited; and if he and the rest of the Fathers did not enlarge as much upon this, as on many other Proofs which they produce, 'tis because they spoke particularly for Heathens, who did not own the Authority of the Scripture. But as for those who look'd upon it as we do, as the rule of their Faith, and of all their Opinions, we cannot doubt but they learnt from it, that which they held concerning Oracles. Now the Holy Scripture taught them very clearly, that Devils were the Authors of them: For to what Deities of the *Pagans*, rather than to those which were suppos'd to deliver Oracles, could they more naturally apply what the Scripture says, *That the Gods of the Nations are Devils; That the things which the Gentiles sacrifice to their Gods, they sacrifice to Devils*; and many other like Texts? Was there any superstition in all Idolatry, wherein the Operation of the evil Spirit was more manifest, than in Oracles? You will say in Magick. And do you doubt but there was Magick in the manner in which Oracles were deliver'd,

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\* Euseb. L. 4. Præp. Evang. c. 16. p. 161. Εικότως ἀρα καὶ ἡ παρ' Ἑβραίοις γενομένη καταμίμνηται τοῖς τὰ τοιαῦτα ζήλῳσας ἢ ἐκ πείσμεως, φασκίσα, καὶ ἔθνον τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς θυσιὰς αὐτῶν τοῖς δαίμοσι. Καὶ ἐφοροκτονήθη ἡ γῆ ἐν τοῖς αἵμασι. καὶ ἐμίανθη ἡ γῆ ἐν τοῖς ἐσθίοις αὐτῶν· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ γῆ καὶ διὰ τέτων ἀπεληλλέ, χθαι (αφῶς, δαμονικῶς τινα γερονέναι ἢ παλαιάτῳ καὶ πρῶτῳ ἢ ἔσθρων ἡδυσιν, καὶ παρ' ἢ ἐδωλῆν ἢ ἐθῶν θεοποιῶν, καὶ δαίμωνων ἐκ ἀσθῶν, ἀλλὰ τὰ πάντα μοχθηροτάτων καὶ φονίων· ὡς ἐπαληθέν τὸ φάσκον ἐν περσφείαις λόσιον, Πάντες οἱ θεοὶ ἢ ἐθῶν δαίμονια· τότε ἀποσολμὸν, δι' ὅφιν, ὅτι αὐτοὶ δαίμονιοι καὶ ἐδῶν θύσαν.

and on which their credit was establish'd? The Primitive Christians made no doubt of this. They were persuaded, 't was by the Enchantments of Magick, as much as by their own Malice, that the Devils were ty'd to the Places where, and the Persons by whom they gave their Answers; and if you consider what *Porphyry*, *Iamblichus* and *Ennapius* relate of these Oracles, and what they teach concerning their detestable *Theurgie*, which was nothing else but the art of calling forth Devils, and making them deliver Oracles, you will own with the Primitive Christians, that Oracles were always accompany'd with *Magick*. Since then you grant, that Devils are the Authors of *Magick*, you must by consequence grant likewise, that they were indeed the Authors of *Oracles*.

*Oracles were always accompany'd with Magick, of which Devils are the Authors.*

But that which yet more strongly persuaded the Primitive Christians and the Fathers, that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, is the perfect conformity they observ'd between the Oracles of the *Gentiles*, and those which the Jewish Idolaters consulted; such as were the Diviners, the

CHAP. XVI.  
*The Conformity of the Oracles of the Gentiles, with those which the Jewish Idolaters consulted, which the*

<sup>b</sup> Origenes L. vii. contra Celsum, p. 334. Προσαπαχρησιζουσιν ἡνὶ πνιδμασα τα δλας (ἰν' ἑταις ὀνομασῶ) αἰῶνας περιδεθῆναι, ὡς ἔτε μαγισανείας τισιν, ἔτε ἡ διατ' ὀφείλεον καλῶν, οἰκοδομαῖς ἡ πόποις; ὁ Δὲς δὴ αἰρεῖ παυλ' ἀτλα νομίζεν ἡνὶ τα τοιαῦτα, τῇ περιστωτικῇ θωαμῇ μίση τυλχανισον εἰς ἀπάρτω τ' ἀνθρώπων χρωῖας; ἡ πρὸς τὸ ἀπεισπιδῶν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τ' δεῦ.

*Scripture tells us were deliver'd by Devils.*

August. L. 8. de Civit. D. c. 24. p. 262. Nam quid sunt Idola, nisi quod eadem scriptura dicit? oculos habent & non vident: & quicquid tale de Materis licet affabre effigiat, tamen vita sensuq; carentibus dicendum fuit: sed immanis spiritus eisdem simulacris arte illa nefaria colligati, cultorum suorum animas in suam societatem redigendo miserabiliter captivaverant.

Magicians, the false Prophets; and particularly all those Men and Women, that were possess'd with the Spirit of Divination call'd *Python*, of which the Scripture speaks so often. They could not doubt, but these Spirits were really Devils; nor can you doubt of it, if we may judge of this by what you say in your Preface: And yet if you did doubt it, that Passage in the *Acts* of the Apostles, <sup>d</sup> of St. Paul's driving out this evil Spirit from a Maid possess'd with it, would perfectly convince you. Now what is there more like the Oracles of the Heathens, than these *Pythoneſſes*? What else for example was the Oracle of *Delphos*, but a Maid or Woman call'd *Pythia*, whom Men went to consult from all parts, to learn of her what was to come, and whom they believ'd possess'd and inspir'd by *Apollo*, when she was seated upon the *Tripos*? She was so in reality: But this *Apollo* was only a Devil, that had borrow'd the Name

The Priestesses, that deliver'd Oracles, were perfectly like those possess'd with familiar Spirits, of whom the Scripture speaks.

<sup>c</sup> Deut. xviii. 10, 11. There shall not be found among you any one, that maketh his Son or his Daughter to pass thro' the Fire — Or a Consulter with familiar Spirits (qui *Pythones* consulat) or a Wizard, 1 Sam. xxviii. 7. Then said Saul unto his Servants, seek me a Woman, that hath a familiar Spirit (mulierem *Pythonem* habentem) that I may go to her, and enquire of her, and his Servants said to him, behold, there is a Woman, that has a familiar Spirit (*Pythonem* habens) at Endor. Isai. viii. 19. Seek unto them, that have familiar Spirits (quærite à *Pythonibus*) and unto Wizards, that peep and that mutter.

<sup>d</sup> Act. xvi. 16. And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain Damsel possess'd with a Spirit of Divination (*habentem spiritum Pythonem*) met us: Which brought her Masters much gain by soothsaying. And v. 18. But Paul being griev'd, turn'd and said to the Spirit, I command thee, in the Name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her; and he came out the same Hour.

of

of this false God, as the Fathers always believ'd \*. What else, in fine, was the Oracle of *Dodona*, that of *Claros*, that of the *Branchidae*, and most of the rest, but Men or Women, who took upon themselves to foretel things to come, by means of a pretended Deity, wherewith they were thought to be inspir'd? What more like these false Prophets, these Diviners, these *Pythonesse*s, which the Jewish Idolaters consulted, and which the Scripture informs us, were possess'd with Devils?

Thus, whatever you may say of it, what the Scripture calls consulting Diviners and Wizards, (*Pythons*) and so much forbids and abhors, as an execrable Abomination, was plainly what the Heathens call'd going to the Oracle. The difference is only in the Name. Now these Spirits, that gave answers by those who were possess'd with them, were Devils, as the Scripture shews very clearly. The Fathers therefore had great reason to believe, that the Idolatrous Priests and Priestesses, who deliver'd the Heathen Oracles, were likewise possess'd with Devils. The Scripture did not permit them to judge otherwise. And certainly those who sincerely own its Authority, can't with any ap-

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\* Chrysostom in cap. 12. 1 Cor. Hom. p. 430. λέγει τοίνυν αὕτη ἡ Πυθία γυνή τις ἔσα ἐγκαθήμενὴ πρὸ τείποδι ποιεῖ τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι, διακρύπτει τὰ κρίματα, ἐν ᾧ τὸ πνεῦμα πονηρὸν κάτωθεν ἀναδιδόμηνον, καὶ διὰ τῶν ψυχικῶν αὐτῆς διαδύομενον μοσιῶν, πληρὴν τῆς γυναικὸς τῆς μανίας, καὶ ταύτῃ τὰς τεύχας λύουσα λοιπὸν ἐκβαλεῖν τε, καὶ ἀφεῖν ἐκ τῆς εὐμαρίδος ἀφίνα, καὶ ἔτιως ἐν παρρησίᾳ ψευδῶν τὰ τῆς μανίας φθίγγειν ῥήματα. οἶδα ὅτι ἡ γυνὴ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἀκούσας ταῦτα ἀκούσας. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνοι καὶ μέγα φρονέουσι καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀχρηστοσύνης καὶ διὰ τῆς μανίας ταύτης. Vide præterea Originem. L. 7. adv. Celsum statim ferè ab initio. p. 333.

*Mr. Van-Dale's  
Error, who  
owns no Devils  
in all the Old  
Testament.*

pearance of Reason be of another mind. Your Author Mr. *Van-Dale* was very sensible of this, and well saw, that to maintain his Paradox, he must reject, not only the Fathers whom he every where treats with contempt, but the Authority also of the Holy Scripture <sup>c</sup>, in all the Versions and Paraphrases that have been made of it; and set himself to shew, <sup>e</sup> that in the *Hebrew* Text of which alone he allows, there is nothing meant of the Devil, nor of his Operations, in all the Places where 'tis most evident they are spoken of,

*The Opinion of  
Vossius concerning  
those, that  
acknowledg no-  
thing but cheat,  
in all that is  
said of the Ope-  
rations of the  
Devil.*

This strange Error, into which his System concerning Oracles has lead him, perfectly confirms what another Protestant <sup>h</sup>, much more Learned and of more Integrity than he, says he has always observ'd, That all those who will not own, that the Devil ever had any dealing with Men, and who believe that all which is reported of Witches and such like Persons, was never more than Cheat and Imposture, either have little knowledge of the holy Scripture, or however they dissemble, have in reality very little esteem or concern for its Authority.

You, Sir, I am persuaded are far enough from falling into this Error, and that as you

<sup>c</sup> Van-Dale in *Dedicat. L. De Origine & Progressu Idololatriæ.*

<sup>e</sup> Idem eodem libro cap. 5, & sequentibus.

<sup>h</sup> Gerardus Joannes Vossius in *Epist. ad Joannem Beverovicium, de Pythonissâ Sâtilis*: Quibus mens est longè alia, non possunt in animum inducere, ulla esse Spiritibus commercia cum homine. Ac sapius mihi cum talibus sermo fuit. Sed deprehendi eos vel admodum negligentèr legisse sacras Literas, vel, utcumq; dissimularent, Scripturarum auctoritatem parvi facere. Toto animo tales abominor.

sincerely own the Divine Authority of the holy Scripture, you will likewise acknowledge with all the Fathers, that the Oracles of the Heathen were deliver'd by Devils, as the same Scripture does clearly enough evince, and as every Body believes also at this Day, except some few, who have possibly been seduc'd by your Book.

The second Reason that confirm'd the Primitive Christians in this Opinion, which they had learn'd from the Scripture, and confirm'd them in it after such a manner, that they could not doubt of it one Moment, was that they themselves expell'd the Devils out of Oracles, and out of the Persons by whom those Oracles gave their answers: That they oblig'd the evil Spirits that presid'd over Oracles to own, even in the Presence of the Heathen, that they were only seducing Spirits: That they constrain'd them by the Invocation of the Name of Christ, to come out of the idolatrous Priests and Priestesses which they had possess'd, in the same manner that St. Paul expell'd the familiar Spirit, by which the Maid spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles, did like those give Answers and Oracles. What could be of more force to confirm them in the Opinion, that Devils were the Authors of Oracles, and to convince us of it too, if we still doubted of it? Besides, they drove out these evil Spirits so infallibly, they put them to silence with so absolute an Authority, they constrain'd them so irresistibly to acknowledge what they were, that they challeng'd the Heathens to the trial of it; so far as to offer to undergo the utmost punishment immediately, if they did not effectually drive them out in their Presence, and make them own their Imposture. I beseech you to

*CHAP. XVII.  
The 2d evident Reason, which confirm'd the Primitive Christians in their Opinion concerning Oracles, was this, that they drove the Devils out of them with a wondrous Authority.*

*The Authority  
of Tertullian  
in this Case.*

hear how *Tertullian* expresses himself on this Subject in his Apology<sup>1</sup>.

“ Hitherto, says he, I have brought Rea-  
“ sons, but now I add Facts, which demon-  
“ strate that your Gods are no more than De-  
“ vils. Let them bring before your Tribunals  
“ any one really possess’d with the Devil; if  
“ a Christian command him to speak, this  
“ wretched Spirit will then as truly own, that  
“ he is no more than a Devil, as at other  
“ times he falsely says he is a God. Likewise  
“ let them produce any one of those who pre-  
“ tend to be inspir’d by a Deity, which they  
“ receive into them with the smoak and odour  
“ of Sacrifices, and draw their Words from  
“ their Stomach with great pains, and pro-  
“ nounce Oracles by fetching their Breath  
“ short: If that Celestial Virgin who promises  
“ Rain, if that *Æsculapius* who prescribes Me-  
“ dicines, and has prolong’d the Life of three  
“ Men that were dying, if they do not own  
“ themselves Devils to the Christiana who shall

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<sup>1</sup> Tertull. in Apolog. cap. 23. p. 22, 23. Sed hætenus verba, jam hinc demonstratio rei ipsius, quæ ostendemus unam esse utriusq; nominis qualitatem. Edatur hic aliquis sub tribunalibus vestris, quem Dæmone agi constet, jussus à quolibet Christiano loqui spiritus ille, tam se dæmonem confitebitur de vero, quam alibi Deum de falso. Equè producatur aliquis ex iis, qui de Deo pari existimantur, qui aris inhalantes numen de nidore concipiunt, qui ructando conantur, qui anhelando profantur. Ista ipsa virgo cœlestis pluviarum pollicitatrix, iste ipse *Æsculapius* medicinarum demonstrator, aliâ die morituris Socordio & Thanatio & *Asclepiodoto* vitæ sumministrator, nisi se Dæmones confessi fuerint, Christiano mentiri non audentes, ibidem illius Christiani procacissimi sanguinem fundite. Quid isto opere manifestius? Quid hæc probatione fidelius? Simplicitas veritatis in medio est, virtus illi sua assistit. Nihil suspicari licebit: Magia aut aliqua ejusmodi fallacia feris dicetis, si oculi vestri & aures percipierint vobis.

“ask them, because they will not dare to lie  
 “in his Presence, put this rash Christian to  
 “Death immediately. What is there, conti-  
 “nues *Tertullian*, more evident than this Fact?  
 “What is there more certain than this Proof?  
 “The truth appears in it simple and naked;  
 “the force of it makes it perceiv’d, and there  
 “is no room left for distrust. Yet I will allow  
 “you to suspect there is Magick or some other  
 “Artifice therein, if your Eyes and your Ears  
 “will give you leave.

*Tertullian* must have been very well assur’d of what he says, to speak with so much Confidence, and to ground upon this Proof a considerable part of his *Apology*, and even the Truth of the Christian Religion, which he there defends against the Heathen. But we need not be surpriz’d at it. Nothing was more ordinary among the Christians, than to draw these kinds of Acknowledgments and forc’d Confessions from the Devils, and the false Prophets whom they possess’d: Insomuch that the same Author<sup>1</sup> affirms, it was that which every Day converted a great number of Heathens, who could not resist so evident a demonstration; and that which at the same time so confirm’d the Christians in their Faith, that they could never doubt of it.

What can you answer to this in Defence of *Mr. De Fontenelle* can answer nothing so  
 your Paradox? If you say they were not De-  
 vils, but idolatrous Priests that gave these kinds  
 of Testimonies; I may answer you with *Tert-*

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<sup>1</sup> Idem. *ibid.* Hæc deniq; testimonia Deorum vestrorum Christianos facere consueverunt. Quia plurimum illis credendo, in Christo Domino credimus. Ipsi literarum nostrarum fidei accendunt. Ipsi spei nostræ fiduciam ædificant.

*tullian*<sup>1</sup>, by changing his words a little: Why then do these idolatrous Priests say they are Devils? Is it to obey and please Us that they thus lie? They obey Us then, and what is most shameful for them, they obey Us who are their greatest Enemies. But in saying they are Devils they dishonour themselves. Is it usual for Persons to lie, to dishonour themselves? On the contrary, is it not to procure themselves honour, that Men ordinarily do it? In fine these Impostors have no Goods nor Advantages, but what their false Religion gives them. Would they deprive themselves of these, in contributing by their Lies, as they do daily, to ruin their Sect, to undeceive their most zealous Partisans, and to increase the number of Christians their declar'd Enemies? All this appears to me to prove evidently, that the Authors of the Heathen Oracles were really Devils, and that the Primitive Christians had the most sensible and most convincing Proof of it, which it is possible to have.

A Passage of  
Lactantius  
equally full and  
express.

But let us hear *Lactantius*, who speaks no less clearly, nor with less assurance on this Subject than *Tertullian*. "Let them bring, says he", one really possess'd, and let the Priest "himself of *Apollo* of *Delphos* come with him, " they

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<sup>1</sup> Idem. ibid. Si altera parte verè Dei sunt, cur sese Dæmonia mentiuntur? An ut nobis obsequantur? Jam ergo subjecta Christianis divinitas vestra—— & si quid ad dedecus facit æmulus suis—— credite illis cum verum de se loquantur, qui mentientibus creditis. Nemo ad suum dedecus mentitur, quin potius ad honorem—— Colitis illos quod sciam, etiam de sanguine Christianorum: Nollent itaq; vos tam fructuosos tam officiosos sibi amittere.

<sup>2</sup> Lactantius. L. 4. Divin. Instit. cap. 27. Deniq; si constitutur in medio & is, quem constat incursum Dæmonis perperi, & Delphici Apollinis vates: Eodem modo Dei nomen horrebunt, & tam celeriter excedet de vate suo Apollo, quam

ex

“ they will both of them equally tremble at the  
 “ Name of God, and *Apello* will come out of  
 “ his false Prophet with as much haste, as the  
 “ Devil out of the Demoniack; and this God  
 “ being thus exorcis’d and driven out, his false  
 “ Prophet will become Dumb and never speak  
 “ more. The Devils therefore which the Hea-  
 “ thens had in execration, are the same with  
 “ the Gods they adore. The Primitive Chri-  
 stians were so certain of casting out the Devils  
 that were the Authors of Oracles, that they  
 offer to try the Experiment upon *Apello* him-  
 self, the chief and most famous of them all:  
 They propose this as an infallible means to  
 know the Truth of their Religion, and the  
 Falshood of that of the Heathen. It was an Ex-  
 periment too which they had often made, and  
 which had never fail’d them, as *Lactantius* as-  
 serts in the same place. Could they doubt af-  
 ter this, but that Oracles were in truth deli-  
 ver’d by Devils?

To *Lactantius* I add *St. Cyprian* <sup>a</sup>, who having *A Passage of*  
 said that they are evil Spirits, that inspire the *St. Cyprian on*  
 false Prophets of the *Gentiles*, that stir the Fi- *the same Sub-*  
*jest.*

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ex homine Spiritus ille dzemoniacus, & adjurato fugatq; Deo  
 suo, vates in perpetuum conticescet. Ergo iidem sunt Dz-  
 mones, quos fateatur execrandos esse, iidem dii, quibus sup-  
 plicant.

<sup>a</sup> Cyprianus. L. De Idolorum vanitate. p. 14. Hi ergo  
 Spiritus sub statuis atq; imaginibus consecratis delitescunt.  
 Hi afflatu suo vatum pectora inspirant, extorum fibras ani-  
 mant, avium volatus gubernant, sortes regunt, oracula effi-  
 ciunt, falsa veris semper involvunt— Hi tamen adjurat  
 per Deum verum nobis statim cedunt & fateantur, & de  
 obsessis corporibus exire coguntur. Videas illos nostrâ voce  
 & oratione occultè flagellis cadi, igni torqueri, incremento  
 pœne propagantis extendi, ejulare, gemere, deprecari;  
 unde veniant & quando discedant, ipsis etiam qui se columæ  
 audientibus confiteri.

bers

bers of the Entrails of Victims, that govern the Flight of Birds, that dispose Lots, and deliver Oracles, by always mixing Falshood with Truth; to prove what he says, adds: " Nevertheless " these evil Spirits adjur'd by the Living God, " immediately obey us, submit to us, own our " Power, and are forc'd to come out of the Bodies they possess. You see that our Prayers " augment their Pains, that they agitate and " torment them in a violent manner. One " hears them howl, groan, intreat, and in the " Presence even of those that worship them, " declare from whence they come, and when " they will withdraw. He repeats very near the same thing, but in fewer words, in his Book against *Demetrianus* \*, and invites this Heathen to come and see with his own Eyes the Truth of what he asserts. " Come, says he to him, " and since you profess to worship the Gods, " at least believe those you worship. You may please to observe, that these Gods or evil Spirits, which obey and submit to the Christians, which howl and exert themselves so wonderfully in their presence, owning to them what they are, and whence they come, are those, as *St. Cyprian* affirms, which inspire the false Prophets of the Heathens, and deliver Oracles. Judge if after this Christians could doubt, but that Oracles were in reality deliver'd by Devils.

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\* *Idem L. contra Demetrianum. p. 191. O si audire eos velles & videre, quando à nobis adjurantur & torquentur spiritualibus flagris, & verborum tormentis de obsessis corporibus ejiciuntur: quando ejulantes & gementes, voce humanà & potestate divinà flagella & verbera sentientes, venturum judicium confitentur. Veni & cognosce esse vera quæ dicimus: & quia sic deos colere te dicis, vel ipsis quos colis crede.*

*Minutius Felix* <sup>p</sup> makes use of the same Proof <sup>Minutius Felix asserts, that the Heathen Gods own'd to the Christians, that they were Devils and the Authors of Oracles.</sup> against the Heathen, and expresses himself almost in the same Terms with *St. Cyprian*: For having said, that it is to Devils we ought to ascribe Oracles, and all the other sorts of Divination, which were in use among Idolaters; (addressing himself to them) he adds, "Most of you know, that the Devils themselves own, they are the Authors of all these Superstitions, as often as by our Prayers we drive them out of the Bodies they possess. *Saturn* himself, *Serapis*, *Jupiter*, and all the other *Demons* you worship, do then acknowledge what they are: and surely it is not credible, they would lye thus to dishonour themselves, especially in your presence. Believe them then, and own they are Devils, since they bear witness against themselves.

I am afraid of tiring you, if I mention any more Authorities on this Subject, yet I can't forbear citing also that of *St. Athanasius*, <sup>q</sup> who <sup>St. Athanasius affirms, that the Sign of the Cross put the</sup> having <sup>Oracles to silence, and challenges the Heathens to make trial of it.</sup>

<sup>p</sup> *Minutius Felix*, in *Octavio*. p. 247. *Isti igitur impuri Spiritus Dæmones*, ut ostensum à *Magis* & *Philosophis* & à *Platone*, sub statuis & imaginibus consecrati delitescunt, & afflatu suo auctoritatem quasi præsentis numinis consequuntur, dum inspirantur interim vatibus, dum fanis immorantur, dum nonnunquam extorum fibras animant, avium volatus gubernant, sortes regunt, Oracula efficiunt falsis pluribus involuta — *Id.* p. 252. *Hæc omnia sciunt plerique vestrum ipsos dæmones de semet ipsis confiteri, quoties à nobis tormentis verborum, & orationis incendiis de corporibus exiguntur. Ipse Saturnus, & Serapis, & Jupiter & quicquid dæmonum colitis, victi dolore quod sunt eloquuntur. Nec utique in turpitudinem sui, nonnullis præsertim vestrum assistentibus, mentiuntur. Ipsis testibus eos esse dæmonas de se verum confitentibus credite; adjurati enim per Deum verum & solum inviti, miseri corporibus inhorrescunt &c.*

<sup>q</sup> *Athanasius L. De Incarn. Verbi Dei.* p. 102. *Καὶ πάλαι οἱ δαίμονες ἐφανίσασιν ὅτι τὸν θεὸν ἀνθρώπων, προσκαταλαβάνοντες*

having said, that the bare Sign of the Cross makes all the Cheats and Illusions of the Devils vanish, does a little after add these Words :  
 “ Let him that would make trial of this, come,  
 “ and in the midst of the Delusions of Devils,  
 “ the Impostures of Oracles, and the Prodiges  
 “ of Magick, let him use the Sign of the Cross,  
 “ which the Heathens laugh at, and he shall see  
 “ how the Devils fly away affrighted, how the  
 “ Oracles immediately cease, and all the En-  
 “ chantments of Magick remain destitute of  
 “ their usual force.

CHAP. XVIII.  
*Instances of the  
 power of Chri-  
 stians over  
 Devils, who  
 were the Au-  
 thors of Ora-  
 cles.*

Do you think, Sir, the Primitive Christians could have more forcible Proofs of the Opinion they had learnt from the Scripture, that Devils were the Authors of Oracles? Seeing that by their Presence, by their Prayers, by the Sign of the Cross, and the Invocation of the Name of Christ, they put Oracles to silence, and drove the Devils out of them : Since they oblig'd *Sa- turn, Serapis, Jupiter, Esculapim, Apollo*, and all the other Gods of the Heathen that deliver'd Oracles, to own even in presence of their worshippers, that they were only Devils and Impostors : Since they forc'd them to come out of the Priest whom they inspir'd, and by whom

λαμβάνοντες πηλὴς ἢ ποταμὸς ἢ ξύλα ἢ λίθος, καὶ ἔτω ἢ  
 μαγισανείας ἑκτέλειον τῷ ἀφρονεῖν· νῦν δ' ἡ δέας ἐπι-  
 φανείας ἢ λόγῳ γενημιδὴς πίπτει τῶτων ἢ φαντασία·  
 τῷ δὲ σημεῖῳ ἢ σαυρὸς καὶ μόνον ὁ ἀνθρώπος ἢ χρεώμε-  
 ἀπελαυνεῖ τῶτων τὰς ἀπάτας· Ἡκέτω δ' ὁ πῶτος ἢ  
 πρὸς χεῖρ' ἐν βυλὸν λαβεῖν, καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῆς ἢ φαντα-  
 σίας ἢ δαιμόνων, καὶ ἢ τῶ μαγείῳ ἀπάτης, καὶ ἢ μα-  
 γείας δαιμόνων, καὶ χρυσάδῳ τῷ σημεῖῳ ἢ γελοῖον  
 παρ' αὐτοῖς σαυρὸς, ἢ χεῖρ' ἐνομάσας μόνον, καὶ ὅλῃ  
 πῶς δι' αὐτῶ δαίμονες μὴ φάσει, μαγεία δ' πᾶσι  
 μαγεία δ' πᾶσα καὶ φαρμακία καταρτίζετο

they gave their answers. If to convince you farther of the wonderful Power of the Christians over the Heathen Oracles, it were necessary to produce authentick Examples of it, I would cite you that of St. Gregory of Neocesarea, related by St. Gregory of Nyssa<sup>\*</sup>; that of St. Babylon the Martyr, mention'd by St. John Chrysostome<sup>†</sup>, and many others such like. But besides that I may speak of this again in the sequel of this Discourse, I hope you will not be harder of belief in this point than the Heathens, who own the Fact it was so evident, as shameful as it otherwise was to them. They were, I say, oblig'd to own, that their Gods could not any where appear, if a Christian were present; that their Oracles were silenc'd; that their Sacrifices, and all sorts of Divination in use among them, were of no effect: But the Reason<sup>\*</sup> they gave of this was, not the Power and

*The Heathens themselves were oblig'd to own it.*

Autho-

<sup>\*</sup> Gregorius Nyssenus in vitâ S. Gregorii Neocæsar. p. 448, &c.

<sup>†</sup> Chryst. Hom. de S. Babyla.

<sup>\*</sup> Arnob. L. 1. adversus Gentes. p. 27. Unus fuit è nobis qui depositò corpore innumeris hominum promptâ se in luce detexit——cujus nomen auditum fugat noxios spiritus, imponit silentium vatibus, haruspices inconsultos reddit, arrogantium magorum frustrari efficit actiones, non horrore, ut diciris, nominis, sed majoris licentiâ potestatis.

Lactantius L. 4. Divin. Instit. c. 27. sed aiunt, hoc Deos non metu, verùm odio facere, quasi quisquam possit odisse nisi eum, qui aut noceat, aut nocere possit: imò vērò congruens majestati fuit, ut eos quos oderant præsentibus pænis afficerent potiùs quàm fugerent. Theodorus Hist. L. iii. c. 3. de Juliano dæmones consulente: Ἐκείνων δὲ μὲν ἡ Λυγίβης παύσεως ἐπαγγέλλον, ὡς ἔκαστος τῶν τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐπιθέσθαι τοῦ μελέωντος ἑαυτοῦ τὸ σῆμα· οἱ δὲ δεισιπλῆκες τρεπόμενοι τὸν τύπον ἰδόντες, καὶ τὴν φωνήν αὐτῆς ἀναμνησθέντες, φρεσὶ παραλίνα ἐκκλονέοντο. Λυγίβης δὲ ὁ γόνος ὁκνῶν καὶ θυγῆς καὶ ἀλτῆρας, ἐπαμύμητο τῷ τῷ. Ἰουλιανὸς

Authority of the Christians over the Heathen Gods, but the abhorrence and hatred those Gods had for the Christians, and for their Religion.

*A Confutation  
of what the  
Author of the  
Republique  
des Lettres pro-  
poses, for the  
explication of  
this Passage of  
St. Athanasius.*

Without doubt you will not alledg this Reason, but will perhaps say what I have read in the Author of the *Republique des Lettres* \*, who with respect to the Place of St. *Athanasius* which I have cited, says, *That the reason why Oracles ceas'd in the presence of Christians was, that the Heathens easily impos'd on the People, while no body was by that could undeceive them, but that they did not dare to undertake any thing of that nature in presence of the Christians, for fear their cheat should be discover'd.* The Christians, according to this Author, were persons of so much judgment and penetration in discovering the Cheats of the Idolatrous Priests, that these Priests did not dare to pronounce their Oracles in their presence: And yet these Christians were so simple and stupid, that they thought they cast out Devils and wrought Wonders, when they only oblig'd a few Impostors to hold their peace and be quiet. They alledg the miraculous Power they have to cast out Devils and put Oracles to silence, as an evident Proof of the Truth of their Religion: They invite the Heathens to make trial of it when they please: They challenge them upon this Subject with an assurance that is astonishing: And they don't perceive,

μαρτυρεῖ ὅτι καὶ τὸ δέος ἐδήλωσε, καὶ τὸ σαυρὲ δαυμάζειν  
ἔφησε τὸ ἰσχυρὸν ἀπέδρασε, ὅτι οἱ δαίμονες, τέτε καὶ τύπον  
ἐκ ἐνεκρότης ἰδὲν· μὴ δὲ τὸ πᾶσι πλάτης ὁ ἀσθεὶς, ὁ  
γόνος ἐστι· ἐν δὲ ἐδρασε, ὡς γε (ὁ φῶς, ἀλλὰ βδελύξατο  
τὸ πᾶσι) ὁ ἡνδραῖος ὁ ἡνδραῖος· ἔγω βεκορήσας τὸ δαίμονος  
ἐμύνησε τε καὶ τὸ μύσους ἐνέπλησε.

\* *Republique des Lettres du mois d'Avril 1699. p. 460.*

that this wonderful Power of which they boast in all their Writings, is only a *Chimera*, and a gross Illusion. But why did not the Idolatrous Priests endeavour once for all to confound them, by accepting their challenge? Could not these Men, that deceiv'd the World for so many Ages, deceive also a few Christians by delivering Oracles in their presence? Were they not engag'd by the most cogent Reasons to make their utmost efforts, and employ their most refin'd Subtilties to succeed therein? Did not they see, that the honour of their Religion, their Reputation, and even their Interest was concern'd in it? All which did infinitely suffer by this Silence which they affected. Would they then have thus contributed to the ruin of their Religion, of their Authority, and of all that was dear to them? Would they have given the Christians so just occasions to insult their Gods, and their own party so good grounds to forsake the Worship of them, as it happen'd very frequently? Besides they were in their Temples, in the midst of a multitude of Idolaters, in presence often of their very Emperours: What then had they to fear? If any Christian had dar'd to open his Mouth, and cry out against the Cheat, would not he have been immediately destroy'd, as a Calumniator and a declar'd Enemy to the Gods? And yet it happen'd more than once upon these occasions, that the presence \* of only

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\* Lactantius. L. 4. Divin. Instit. cap. 27. Nam cum Diis suis immolant, si assistor aliquis signatam frontem gerens, sacra nullo modo litant.

Nec responsa potest consultus reddere vates.

Et hæc sæpe causa præcipua justitiam persequendi malis regibus fuit. Cum enim quidam nostrorum sacrificiis dominis assisterent, impositis frontibus signo Deos eorum fugaverant, ne possent in visceribus hostiarum futura de-

*The presence of only one Christian tho' unknown, even of an only one Christian tho' unknown, made the Oracles dumb and confounded the Southsayers.* only one Christian tho' unknown, even of an infant, arm'd with the Sign of the Cross, put all the Oracles and the false Prophets to silence, and confounded the Augurs and the Southsayers, to the great astonishment of the Heathens, and of the Emperours themselves. Who does not see therefore how ridiculous the conjecture of this Author is? But it was necessary to find out some shift to evade this Passage of *St. Athanasius*, because of the Consequences, which were too visible and too intricate for a Protestant \*.

## CHAP. XIX.

*The 3d Reason, which persuaded the Primitive Christians, that Oracles proceeded from the Devil was, that they led Men to all sorts of crimes, Impieties, and Abominations.* The third Reason the Christians had to believe, that Devils were the Authors of Oracles, is that all Oracles only led Men to the foulest

*pragere. Quod cum intelligerent Aruspices, instigantibus istis demonibus quibus, consecrant, conquirentes profanos homines sacris interesse, adegerunt principes suos in furorem, &c.*

Prudentius in Apotheosi: p. 171. l. 449.

Principibus tamen è cunctis nò defuit unus,

Me puero, ut mèmini, ductor fortissimus armis—

Fortè litans Hecatch placabat sanguine multo—

Cùm subito exclamat media inter sacra Sacerdos

Pallidus, en quid ago? majus, rex optime, majus,

Mumen nescio quod nostris intervenit aris—

Nescio quis ceres subcepit Christicolarum

Hic juvenum, gens hoc hominum tremit insula, & omne

Pulvinar Divum, lotus procul absit & unctus—

Dixit & exanguis collabitur, ac velut ipsum

Cerneret exerto minitantem fulmine Christum.

Ipsè quoq; examinis posito diademate Princeps

Ballet, & astantes circumspicit, ecquis alumnus

Chriskmaris, inscripto signaret tempora signo,—

Qui Zoroastræos turbâset fronte fufurros.

Armiger è cuneo puerorùm flavicomantum,

Purpurei custos lateris deprenditur unus,

Nec negat, ac signum Christi se ferre facetur.

Prosiluit pavidus dejecto antistite Princeps,

Marmoreum fugiens nullo comitante sacellum.

\* See the Preface of the Translator.

Crimes

Crimes and most infamous Abominations: From whence they concluded, that they could proceed from none but those malicious Spirits, who only seek to destroy Men, and throw them headlong into all sorts of errors and disorders. *Eusebius* enlarges much upon this Proof, and confirms it by a great many Testimonies taken out of Heathen Authors, and particularly By the Oracles which *Porphyry* has cited in his Book of *Philosophy*.

I. *Eusebius* \* shews, that it was Oracles *Twos Oracles commanded human Sacrifices.*

\* Euseb. L. 4. Præp. Evang. cap. 15. p. 153, 154. Viro interprete. At cum ex dæmonibus alios quidem bonos, alios verò malos esse dicat (*Porphyrius*) videamus parò quibus argumentis Deos ab istis celebratos non bonos, sed malos fuisse Dæmones constare certò possit. Equidem vel hæc ipsa ratione confici rem existimo. Quicquid bonum est, prodesse solet, nocere verò, contrarium: Atqui si quotquot seu Dii seu Dæmones passim & ubiq; prædicantur, illi ipsi inquam, istorum omnium ore jactati, atq; à gentibus culti universis, Saturnus, Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, idq; Genus cæteri, adeòq; virtutes illæ, quæ sub aspectum non cadunt, quiq; per simulacra vim suam exerunt Dæmones; eos inquam omnes si non modò brutarum animantium, verum etiam hominum cædibus ac sacrificiis delectari, sicq; miserorum animis exitium afferre ostendetur; quam tu diuiniorem istà perniciem cogitare possis—Itaq; Pater unigenam filium, materq; filiolam carissimam dæmonibus immolabant; & familiares propinquosq; suos, perinde ac brutas alienasq; pecudes, homines amicissimi jugulabant: Adeòq; per urbes passim & pagos; Diis videlicet egregiis Domesticos quiq; suos popularesque mactabant, humanam sensuq; cognatam naturam ad truce[m] immanemq; crudelitatem acuentes, ac furioso vereq; à Dæmonibus inuesto more sævientes. Enimverò seu Græcam seu Bæbaram Historiam excutias, occurret tibi continuo, quemadmodum alii filios, filias alii, alii deniq; semetipsos Dæmonum sacrificiis devoverent. *Eusebius shews afterwards, ibid. cap. 16. by a great number of Testimonies taken out of Porphyry and Philo the Phenician, Diodorus Siculus and Clemens Alexandrinus, how much this detestable brutality of sacrificing Men was spread through all Paganism: But that of Dionysius Halicarnassæus, (ibid. p. 159.) shews also, that it had been introduc'd by Oracles.*

which persuaded Men to offer human Victims to the Gods, and perform those kinds of bloody Sacrifices, which were formerly so common among Idolaters. He proves it particularly by the authority of *Dionysius Halicarnassensis*, to which it were very easie to add a great many more taken out of *Pausanias*, *Plutarch*, *Ælian*, *Macrobius*, *Oenomaus*

*Pausanias*. L. vi. cap. 6. p. 355. Ἐς ὃ ἡ Πυθία τὸ ἑρμῶ-  
παν ἔχει τάλιας ὀρμηιδῶν φάσιν, Τεμείων μὲ ἐκλιπῶν  
ἐκ αὐτῆς. ἢ Ἡρώ Λοῦε ἐκλάδων ἰατρικῶν, τῶνδ' οὖν τι  
ὑπομνήσας οἰκοδομήσας τῶν, δίδουσι ἢ καὶ ἐπὶ αὐτῶν  
γυμνάσιον ἢ τὴν Τεμείων παρθένον ἢ καλλίστην τῆς μὲν δὲ  
πᾶσι καὶ ἢ δὲ πρὸς τὰς ἀνδράσιν ὑπεργῶσι, δέμας καὶ ἢ  
δαίμονας ἐς τὰ ἄλλα ἢ ἰδόν.

*Idem*. L. vii. cap. 19. p. 434. Καταφυγόντων ἢ αὐτῶν  
ἐπὶ χερσὶν αὐτῶν τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς, ἡλίσχον ἡ Πυθία Μελάνι-  
τον καὶ Κομαιδῶν. Καὶ ὁσέως τε αὐτὸς μνήσθημα ἀφίκετο  
δύσαι τῇ Ἀστέμει, καὶ ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος παρθένον καὶ παῖδα,  
εἰ τὸ εἶδος ἔσιν κάλλιστοι, τῇ δὲ δύειν.

*Plutarchus in Parall. Græc. & Rom.* p. 550. Ποιῶν καὶ  
Σιδηίων. ἢ καὶ Ῥωμαίων Συμμαχίαν ἐτοιμαζέμεν,  
Μέγαλον στρατηγὸς μὲν τῇ Ἑστὶ ἐκ ἑθύσει, ἢ ἢ πρὸς  
μα ἀντιπρόσωπον ἢ ναυσι. Γαίῃ ἢ ἑλκὸς μάλιστα ἀπὸ  
λοφῶσαι, ἔαν πρὸς ἢ δύσασιν. ὃ ἢ ἀνασκαδῶσι  
Μεγαλίαν ἢ δύσασιν πρὸς ἢ.

*Ælianus Var. Hist.* L. xii. cap. 28. Λεωχρεῖον Ἀθλῶνσην  
δααλεῖτο τὸ τέλειον ἢ Λεω δύσασιν Πραξιθέας  
καὶ Θεόπρος καὶ Εὐκλείης, ταύτας ἢ καὶ τὴν Πύλαος  
ἢ Ἀθλῶν, ἀναρροβῶναι Λύγῃ ἢ ἐκ, ἐπιδόσιν αὐτάς ἢ  
Λεω εἰς ἢ χερσὶν καὶ Διόσκῳ. ἔλεγε γὰρ μὴ ἂν ἄλλως  
Ῥωβῶναι ἢ πύλας, εἰ μὴ ἐκείναι Ῥασιαδοῖεν.

*Macrobius Saturn.* L. i. cap. 7. p. 187, 188. Pelasgi,  
sicut Varro memorat, cum sedibus suis pulsi diversas terras  
perissent, confluerunt plerique; Dodonam, & incerti quibus  
adhaerere locis, ejusmodi accepere responsum,

Στοιχίσι μαίμενοι Σιδηῶν Σαφηνίαν αἶαν,

ἢ Ἀβροχρεῖον καὶ Πύλας, ἢ γὰρ ὄχευ

Αἰς ἀναμχθόντες δικάτω κατὰ μὲν τοῖς ποῖον

Καὶ κεφαλὰς ἀδῶν, καὶ τὸ πᾶσι σέμπερ ῥῶτα—

Cumq; diu humanis capibus Ditem, & virorum victimis Sa-  
curum placere se crederent—Herculem ferunt postea cum  
Geryonis

mais, Virgil, and many others, who all mention some of those Oracles, which requir'd human Sacrifices. It is evident such a barbarity could be commanded only by Devils: Men naturally abhor it. It was with great difficulty, and an extraordinary violence to themselves, that they ever suffer'd it; nor could it be otherwise, since their own Children were often taken from them, to be unmercifully sacrific'd to Idols.

Tho' Eusebius had brought no other reasons for his Opinions, this ought to be sufficient to convince any reasonable Man, and make him own, that it is not possible, that Oracles should have had no other Principle, but the imposture of Idolatrous Priests. Indeed what likelihood was there, that mere Cheats, suppose them never so wicked, would have requir'd such Sacri-

*These kinds of Sacrifices could not be enjoined but by Devils, or by Men possess'd with the Devil.*

Geryonis pecore per Italiam revertentem, suasse illorum posteris, ut saustis Sacrificiis inausa mutarent.

Idem Oraculum refert Lactantius. L. 1. Divin. Institut. cap. 21. De quo præterea Dionysius Halicarn. apud Euseb. loco citato.

Oenomaüs apud eundem L. 5. Præp. Evang. cap. 27. p. 223. Hoc Apollinis refert Oraculum Messenis redditum:

Παρθένον Αἰπυλῖδα κλέει καλεῖ, ἢν τινα δοίης  
Δαίμοσι νεφέλοισ, παῖδεν ᾧσας ἰδὼμιν.

Et cap. 19. p. 209. Illud Atheniensibus datum de expianda cæde Androgeo:

Λοιμὴ καὶ λιμὴ τέλει ἐστὶ, καὶ περ ἰανθῆ  
Σαρματ' ἀπὸ κλήρου ἄρρεν καὶ θῆλυ νέμει  
Μίρωι, εἰς ἅλα δῖαν ἀποσπασσας, ἀμοιβὴν  
Τῶν ἀδίκων ἔσται· ἔτω θεὸς ἰλασθ' ἔσται.

De eodem Virgilius Æneid. L. 6. l. 20.

In Foribus lethum Androgeo: Tum pendere poenas  
Cecropidæ iussi, (miserum) septena quotannis  
Corpora Natorum. Scit ductis fortibus urna.

Idem. L. 2. l. 116.

Sanguine placastis ventos & Virgine cæcā,  
Cùm primùm Iliacas Danaï venistis ad Oras,  
Sanguine querendi reditus, animaq; litandum  
Argolicâ—

sices? What advantage could they hope from thence? On the contrary what dreadful Punishments must they have expected, if after having commanded and executed these bloody Tragedies, their Cheats had been discover'd, as they must every moment apprehend they would be? Was it that Men deliver'd themselves up so blindly to a cruel Death, without being first certain of the Truth of the Oracle, without ever opening their Eyes to these barbarous Impostures, by the help of which the Idolatrous Priests did thus sport with their Lives? Whole Nations have been known to forsake their Countries and Estates, to avoid being forc'd to submit themselves to these sanguinary Oracles; and would they never have had the thought to challenge their Priests of Imposture? If we can believe Men could thus divert themselves with the Lives of other Men for whole Ages together, and the Cheat never be discover'd, what may we not believe after this?

CHAP. XX. II. Eusebius<sup>e</sup> shews, that Oracles command-

*The same Oracles warranted those abominable Indecencies, that were practis'd in the Heathen Temples, in their Games, their Mysteries, and their Feasts.*

<sup>a</sup> Dionys. Halicarp. apud Euseb. loco cit. supr. p. 83.

<sup>e</sup> Euseb. Præp. Evang. L. iv. cap. 16. sub finem. p. 162.

Veruntamen improborum Dæmonum totum id fuisse clariùs etiam intelliges, si de infandâ illa effusâq; scortandi libidine, cujus etiamnum apud Heliopolim Phœniciz atq; alios plerosq; populos usus est, tecum ipse cogitaveris. Adulteria siquidem, corruptelas, aliaq; id genus incesta flagitia, sic tanquam debitum aliquod in Deorum suorum cultu representanda esse defendunt, adeoq; turpitudinis indignissimæ suas quoq; primitias ipsis offerendas, scædi videlicet infamizq; commercii fructum iis, perinde ut eximium quoddam grari animi monimentum, consecrando. Sunt enim humanarum hostiarum isthæc affinia. Quod si ab homine temperante ac moderato alienum est, non modo cædibus, verum etiam dictu scædis libidinibus, nefariisq; muliercularum speciem venalem habentium stupris delectari: Longè profectò dicendum est seu Deos seu bonos etiam Dæmones ab iis expectendis ac probandis abesse.

ed or warranted those monstrous Indecencies, which were practic'd publickly in the Temples of Idols, as so many Acts of Religion with which the Gods were pleas'd. If I did not abhor the very thoughts of all these Infamies, I would expose them here; In relating what the Fathers have been oblig'd to say of them, to confound the Heathen. I would also add the abominations of their Mysteries, of their Games, and of their Feasts, which all sprang from the same Fountain, and had the same Authors that Oracles had. Thereby I am sure, I should make the most incredulous Persons acknowledge, that none but the Devil, that *unclean Spirit* as our Saviour calls him, could lead Men to all these abominable Uncleanesses.

III. He shews that Oracles taught *Magick*<sup>b</sup>, *They taught* which you your self own to come from Devils; *Magick.* and he proves it very largely by the Testimony

<sup>a</sup> Clemens Alexand. in Protrept. Arnobius adv. Gentēs. August. L. De Civit. Dei. & alii.

<sup>b</sup> Euseb. Præp. Evang. L. vi. cap. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, &c. Jam verò (inquit cap. 10. sub finem. p. 199.) non alios ab initio maleficæ artis Magistros, quàm ipsamet egregia numina constat. Qui enim isthæc homines aliter nosse potuissent, nisi Dæmones iis res ipsi suas aperuissent, & quibus quiq; vinculis constringantur, indicassent? Neq; verò nostram hanc Orationem esse putes; quippe qui nihil istorum à nobis aut intelligi aut expeti faciamur—Idem à nobis testis producatur, qui & sapiens à suis habetur, & omnes religionis Patriæ rationes accuratè non modò novit, sed etiam exposuit. Ille igitur in laudatâ Oraculorum collectione ad verbum habet quæ sequuntur. cap. xi. p. 200. Neq; tantum, inquit, proprias instituti sui rationes, aut cætera quæ à nobis commemorata sunt, verum quibus ipsi rebus aut delectentur aut vinciantur, imò quibus etiam cogantur, indicarunt. Quibus item hostiis rem sacram fieri, quos dies caveri, quam in formam ac speciem simulacra configurari oporteat; quoniam ipsi ore habituq; appareant; quibus in locis assidui sint &c.

of Porphyry, and of the Oracles which that Heathen has produc'd, to authorize his *Theurgick Philosophy*, to which most of the Philosophers of his time were extremely addicted, as well as he.

*They occasion'd an infinite number of Murders, and of Wars.*

IV. He shews that Oracles carry'd Men only to Idolatry, Wars, Murders, and Seditious; that they had occasion'd the death of great numbers of People, and the entire ruin of Kingdoms and Republicks. This we see agrees very well with him, of whom our Saviour says in the Gospel, that *he was a Murderer from the beginning*.

*They command'd wicked and profligate Persons to be rank'd among the Gods.*

V. He shews that Oracles prais'd such as were known to be wicked and profligate, as the Poet *Archilochus*, and *Cleomedes* the Wrestler, to whom they even enjoy'd that divine Honours should be pay'd.

VI. He shews that Oracles taught, that nothing

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. ibid. cap. 20, 21, 24, 27, &c.

<sup>2</sup> John viii. 44. *He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.*

<sup>3</sup> Euseb. ibid. cap. 33. p. 227.

<sup>4</sup> Ἀδύλατος ὁ καὶ αἰδούμενος τῶν τελευτήων  
ἔσται ἐν ἀνθρώποις. — ὁ δὲ καὶ ἐν Ἀρχιλόχῳ.

De Cleomede verò, cap. 34. p. 230.

<sup>5</sup> Ὡς δὲ Ἡρώων Κλεομένης Ἀκυπαλίδης,

ὅν δυσταίς τιμᾶν, ὡς ἐκ ἐπιθνήσκον ἰόβη.

<sup>6</sup> Idem ibid. L. vi. c. 6. p. 242, 243. Jam verò cum Dæmon omnia illis suis oraculis ex Fati necessitate suspendat, atq; id etiam, quod pro libertatis nostræ motu ac potestate agitur, funditus sublatum eadem servitute constringat; vide sis obsecro, quàm in exitialem dogmatum pestem suos ille sectatores coniecerit: Nam si astris atq; Fato non externarum modò rerum, sed earum etiam cupiditatum, quæ mentis & intelligentiæ ductum sequuntur, alligandæ rationes erunt; si humanæ cogitationes atq; sententiæ vi quâdam inexorabilis necessitatis agentur, nulla jam profectò philosophia est, nulla religio, probis laus ex virtute nulla, nulla Dei benevolentia, nullus deniq; fructus susceptorum laborum, contentione dignus, cum necessitati atq; Fato servata causæ omnium assignentur. Enim vero nec improbis deinceps aut impiis

nothing happen'd nor was done in the World, but by a fatal Necessity: a detestable Doctrine, *They brought the Doctrine of a fatal Necessity into the World.* which as *Eusebius* with much force and eloquence shews, destroys all Vertue, overthrows all Law, and authorizes all Wickedness: From all this he concludes, that none but Devils could be Authors of all these so pernicious Oracles. *Theodoret* <sup>a</sup> makes use of very near the same Proofs, but in fewer Words, and concludes the same Thing from them. *Origen* <sup>o</sup> adds some others, from whence he draws the same Conclusion against the Heathen. And *Athenagoras* <sup>p</sup> proves the same Truth by the extravagance and impiety of the *Pagan* superstitions which he shews could come only from Devils.

I know not whether that which convinc'd *The Conclusion of this First Part of the Answer.* these great Men, and all Christian Antiquity with them, will be sufficient to convince you. However I beg you to examine these Reasons, on which they believ'd, that Devils were the Authors of the Heathen Oracles, and to tell me afterwards, whether to be convinc'd of it as they were, they could have more certain and evident Proofs, than the joint Testimony of Holy Scripture, of their own Eyes and Ears, and of the Oracles themselves.

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piis, omniumq; adeo scelerum turpitudine laborantibus succensendum erit; nec virtutis amatoribus laudis quicquam honorisq; tribuendum — Vide ergo quam in exitium dogmatum voraginem clientes suos egregia numina conceperint: atq; ut ejusmodi sententiâ, dum ad nequitiam, injuriarum licentiam, aliorumq; malorum vim ac multitudinem infinitam extimalat, vitæ simul universæ perniciem ultimam molitur. Nam ubi quis semel præclaris Deorum permotus Oraculis &c.

<sup>a</sup> Theodoret. de Græc. Affect. cur. Sermon. 10. de Oraculis.

<sup>o</sup> Origines L. vii. contra Celsum.

<sup>p</sup> Athenagoras Apol. pro Christianis.

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AN  
ANSWER  
TO THE  
*History of Oracles,*

Address'd to the

AUTHOR.

The Second PART.

In which those Authorities and Reasons are confuted, which the Author alleges to prove directly, that the Heathen Oracles were not deliver'd by Devils.

CHAP. I.

*The design of this second Part of the Answer.*

*Proofs advanced by the Author of the History to maintain his Opinion.*

**G**IVE me leave, Sir, after having answer'd the Six first Chapters of your Dissertation, in a few words to examine those that follow, and to answer what you there say to prove directly, that Oracles were only the Cheats and Impostures of idolatrous Priests. To maintain this Opinion you first produce the Authority of those, as well Heathens as Christians, who have been

been of the same Opinion with you concerning Oracles. You next shew by particular Circumstances remarkable in Oracles, that they never deserv'd to be attributed to Spirits. Lastly, You give us a long account of those Cheats, by which you pretend idolatrous Priests impos'd on the credulity of the People.

With respect to Authority you say, That *Tho' the Hea-*  
 \* three great Sects of Philosophers, did not believe *then Philoso-*  
 there was any thing supernatural in Oracles, *phers had not*  
 viz. The Cynicks, the Peripateticks, and the *believ'd, that*  
 Epicureans. Allowing this to be true, does it *thing Superna-*  
 follow from hence that they were of your Opi- *tural in Ora-*  
 nion, and that they believ'd as you do, that *cles; it would*  
 Oracles were only the Cheats and Impostures *not thence fol-*  
 of Men? Could not they ascribe what they saw *low, that they*  
 extraordinary therein to some natural Causes, *was nothing*  
 as Aristotle seems to have done, attributing the *but Cheat in*  
 Enthusiasm of the Sibyls, and of all those that *them.*  
 pass'd for inspir'd, either to their melancholy  
 Constitution, or to the vertue of Exhalations  
 of certain places of the Earth? Eusebius,  
 from whom you have taken what you assert here,  
 does not say, that the Philosophers believ'd  
 Oracles were nothing but Cheats. He only says,  
 they

\* Hist. Diff. 1. ch. 7. p. 80, 81.

\* Aristot. Problem. Sect. 30. q. 1. p. 215. Πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ διὰ τὸ ἐγγύς τῃ τοῦ τόπου τὴν θεομετρίαν ταύτην, νοσήμασιν ἀλίσκον, ἢ μανικοῖς, ἢ ἐνθουσιαμοῖς ὄντων (ἰσχυλαί, καὶ βέλκιδες, καὶ οἱ ἐνθιοὶ γίνονται πάντες, ὅταν μὴ νοσήμασι ᾗων), ἀλλὰ φυσικῇ κινήσει.

\* Idem. L. De Mundo. cap. 4. p. 11. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ πλάσματα πολλὰ πολλαχῇ γῆς εἰσὶν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς τὰ μὲν, ἐνθουσιᾶν ποιεῖ τὸν ἐμπειροζώντα, τὰ δὲ ἀπειροζώντα, τὰ δὲ χρησιμώδη, ὡς τὰ ἐν Διόροις, καὶ τὰ ἐν Λαβυρίνθῳ.

Euseb. L. 4. Præp. Evang. c. 2. p. 136. Καὶ ἦσαν παρ' αὐτοῖς Ἕλλησιν ὁμοῦ δὲ φιλοσοφίας διατρεπταὶ αἰρέσεις ταύτης περιεσφαιρῆσαι τὴν δόξην ὡς οἱ ἀπὸ Λεωσίαν καὶ πάν-

they rejected them as unprofitable, lying, and pernicious. They had reason to use them thus, and the Christians, who were convinc'd that Devils were the Authors of them, spoke of them in the same manner. You cannot therefore produce these Philosophers as Patrons of your Opinion; and the *Peripateticks* much less than the other two: For *Cicero* \* in his Books of *Divination* reckons the *Peripateticks* among those Philosophers, who maintain'd all the kinds of Divinations which were then in use, with this difference only, that some of the newest admitted none for true and lawful, but such as came from Dreams, and from Inspiration, which are the two chief ways by which Oracles were deliver'd. As for all the other Philosophers, he acknowledges none but *Xenophanes* and *Epicurus*, who were of a contrary Opinion. What you say therefore is far from being true,

The *Peripateticks* did not reject Oracles.

ὅτι πάντες οἱ καθ' ἑξῆς τῶν περὶ αὐτῶν, Κωϊκοὶ τε καὶ Ἐπικουροὶ — τὰ βούμια χρηστέα, καὶ τὰ ὄρα πᾶσι μετέδοσαν, ἀλλ' οὐ μάλιστα ἵδ' ἀπερρίπτειν, καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπιτελεῖν τὴν φύσιν.

\* Cicero L. 1. De Divin. statim ferè ab initio, p. 4803, Philosophorum verò exquisita quædam Argumenta, cur esset vera divinatio, collecta sunt. Ex quibus, ut de antiquissimis loquar, Colophonius Xenophanes, unus, qui Deos esse diceret, divinationem fundicis sustulit. Reliqui verò omnes, præter Epicurum, balburientem de naturâ Deorum, divinationem probaverunt, [sed non uno modo.] Nam cùm Socrates, omnesq; Socratici, Zenôq; & ii, qui ab eo essent profecti, manerent in antiquorum Philosophorum sententiâ, vetere Academiâ, & Peripateticis consentientibus, cùmque huic rei magnam auctoritatem Pythagoras jam antè tribuisset, qui etiam ipse augur vellet esse, plurimisq; locis gravis auctor Democritus prætensionem rerum futurarum comprobaret: Diocærchus Peripateticus cætera divinationis genera sustulit, somniorum & furoris reliquit: Cratippusq; familiaris noster, quem ego parem summis Peripateticis judico, iisdem rebus idem tribuit, reliquâ divinationis genera rejectit.

\* That

\* *That half the learned Men of Greece were at liberty to believe nothing of Oracles.* Since all these learned Men are reduc'd to a few *Cynicks*, *There were only a few Cynicks and Epicureans, who did not ascribe them to the Gods; but they did not for that Reason attribute them to the Cheats of Idolatrous Priests.* who far from being Learned or Knowing, did on the contrary profess to reject all the liberal Sciences; without excepting even *Logick* and *Natural Philosophy*; and to some *Epicureans*, who denying Providence, and acknowledging only a careless and negligent God, did consequently deny that he had any thing to do with Oracles, which the other Philosophers ascrib'd to the Gods, and to the care they took of Men. But from all this I say again, it does not follow that the *Cynicks* and the *Epicureans* own'd nothing in Oracles but Imposture, since whatever they saw extraordinary in them might be ascrib'd to Natural Causes, as is done by *Aristotle*. And tho' they had been of your Opinion, as *Oenomaüs*, one of them, seems to have been, their Authority would be of no very great weight, nor indeed would it do you much honour.

You add, That † *Eusebius* tells us, six hundred

\* Hist. ibid. p. 81.

† Diogen. Laert. De vitâ Philosoph. L. 6. in Menedemio. §. 103. & 104. p. 365. Placet ergo illis (Cynicis) Rationalem naturalemq; Philosophiam tolli oportere, ab Aristote Chio non discedentibus, moraliq; soli intendi: & infra Repudiare & disciplinas liberales— tollunt & Geometriam & Musicam & cætera id genus. Ita Lærtius interprete Ambrosio Camald.

‡ Oenomaüs apud Euseb. L. 5. Præp. Evang. de quo sic ipse Eusebius, cap. 21. p. 213. Τοιαῦτα ὁ Οἰνομάς παρρησίας τὰ καὶ τὸ γούτων ποσὲς, κυνικῆς καὶ ἀπυλλασίας πικρίας· ἐδὲ καὶ δαίμονας, μὴ ὅτι θεῶν, καὶ παρ' ἑλλήνων θαυμαζομένων χρησμούς· ὃ βέλεθ, γούτων δ' ἀνδρῶν πλεονας καὶ σοφισμάτα ἐπὶ ἀπάτῃ τὸ πολλῶν εὐκαίωρηθ' α.

† Hist. ibid.

‡ Euseb. L. 4. Præp. Evang. cap. 2. p. 136. Μυρίων ὃ ὄντων καὶ διὰ πλεόνων καὶ τὸ μαντικῶν ἀναλεπτῶν ποιομένων.

The Author's  
mistake con-  
cerning a Pas-  
sage in Ense-  
bius.

dred of the Heathens had writ against Oracles. You might count ten thousand of them, taking things thus strictly according to the Letter; since *Ensebius* makes use of the Greek word *μυροίον*, which signifies ten thousand, and which the Latin Translator, whom alone you consulted, has elegantly render'd by the word *Sexcenti*. It is surprizing that you did not consider, that the Latin word *Sexcenti* in this place, as the Greek word *μυροίον*, accented as it is, does after an indefinite manner signify an infinite or a great Number, and that that is an ordinary figure, by which a very great determinate Number is taken for another that is uncertain and less. You will say perhaps, that you take the French word *six cens* in the same indefinite Sense. But I never yet saw any instance of that use of it in the French [or of the English *six hundred* in our] Authors; you'll oblige me if you can shew me any.

Some Heathens  
might condemn  
Oracles, and  
yet not believe,  
that they were  
only the Impos-  
sures of Men.

You say again, That \* *others besides the Philosophers did often shew very little esteem for Oracles*. You give an instance or two of it. But what can you conclude from thence? that Oracles were only cheats? This consequence is not just. Are there not incredulous and wicked Persons among Christians, who laugh at Miracles? Can we thence conclude that Miracles are nothing but Cheats? Besides, could not these Heathens, Philosophers or others, believe (as in reality some by your own Concession did) that Oracles were deliver'd by evil *Demons* or

*μυροίον*. Quæ verba Latinus Interpretes Franciscus Vigerus ita eleganter reddidit: Cæterum cum Sexcenti vaticiniorum istorum vanitatem pluribus confutaverint, &c.

\* Hist. Diss. I. ch. 8. p. 97.

lying & mischievous Spirits; and very much despise them on that account? The Christians did always believe thus of them, and had them in great contempt for this reason. It was possible then to despise Oracles, without believing at the same time, that they were nothing but the cheats of Idolatrous Priests.

But even tho' it should follow, that those who despis'd Oracles, did not believe they were deliver'd by Gods or Demons, of what weight can their Authority be against that of all the rest? Some Epicureans and some Cynicks did not believe there was any thing supernatural in Oracles; but all the other Philosophers were persuaded there was, and maintain'd it strenuously. Two or three that pass'd for wicked Persons among the Heathens, laugh'd at them, but all the rest regarded them as what was most Divine in their Religion. Whole Cities and Provinces ran in crowds to them: They made no Wars, planted no Colonies, undertook no Affairs of Importance, without first consulting the Oracle. In a word, the Heathen Religion had never any thing that was more famous or more esteem'd: What then can signify the Authority of a small number of private Persons,

CHAP. II.  
The Authority of the small number of those, who among the Heathens despis'd Oracles, is of little Moment in comparison of theirs, who esteem'd them.

<sup>a</sup> Porphyr. in Epist. ad Anebonem Ægyptium. Οἱ δὲ ἱερεῖς ἐξωθεν τίθεν· τὰ ἱεράκια ἄναστασις οὖσα, παντομορφόν τε καὶ πολύτερον, ὑποκρινόμενον καὶ θεὸς καὶ δαίμονας καὶ ψυχὰς τεθηκότεον, καὶ διὰ τούτων πάντα δυνάμεως τὸ δυνάμιον ἀφαιρῶν καὶ κακῶν ἱερέων ἐπεὶ εἰς τὰς οὐλὰς ἀγαθὰ, ἀπὸς ἱερέων καὶ ψυχῶν, μηδὲν καθάπερ συμβαλλέως δυνάμεως, μηδὲ εἰδέναι ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ κακοχαλδαιῶν καὶ τωιδάζειν καὶ ἐμποδίζειν πολλὰς τοῖς εἰς ἀρετὴν ἀφικνεύοις, πλήρεις τὲ ἱερέων τύφου καὶ χαιρείν ἀπὸ τοῖς κακοχαλδαῖς. Vide Eundem apud Eusebium L. 4. Præp. Evang. cap. 22, & 23. & Theodorum Serm. 10. de Oraculis, idem ex Plutarcho probantem.

look'd

look'd upon as wicked by all others, if compar'd with that of so many People, Cities, and Provinces, of so many Princes and Philosophers?

*In point of Authority the greatest and soundest part ought always to prevail.*

You are sensible of the force of this Argument; and to weaken it you say, That \* *the Testimony of those who believe a thing already establish'd, is of no force to uphold it; but that the Testimony of those who do not believe it, is of force to destroy it.* This seems to me a very odd Proposition, and one which may have strange Consequences. The Existence of God is an establish'd Truth; and when we would confirm it by Authority, should that of the few Atheists who deny it, prevail above that of all the People and Nations of the Earth who believe it? Shall the Authority of these impious Persons be of more force to overthrow it, than that of all the rest of Mankind to uphold it? Christianity is establish'd and spread over the World: Should the Authority of a few Libertines, who do not give much credit to it, prevail above the universal Opinion of the Faithful, who believe it, and own it for the only true Religion? Have not all Men hitherto believ'd, and does not even common Sense teach, that in point of Suffrages and Authorities, the greatest and soundest part ought always to prevail?

*The incredulous are generally less acquainted with the Reasons for believing, than they who believe are with those for not believing.* But you say, and 'tis the Proof you bring of your Paradox, † *They who believe may be unacquainted with the Reasons against believing; but it is impossible, that they who do not believe should be unacquainted with the Reasons for believing.* It is in my Opinion quite the contrary: For except the meaner sort of People, who whether they

\* Hist. ibid. p. 111.

† Hist. ibid.

believe or not, do not much trouble themselves with the Reasons for or against, it is impossible those who believe should not be acquainted with the Reasons against believing: But they who do not believe may very easily be unacquainted with the Reasons for believing, and that because there is difficulty in believing: It is a Servitude against which the Spirit of Man naturally sets it self. Thus those who believe are induc'd to examine the Reasons against believing, to deliver themselves if possible, from this so uneasy Bondage; and they who do not believe, thinking it a great Happiness to be freed from this troublesome Yoke, do naturally avoid all that might bring them under it; and are much more inclin'd to inform themselves of the Reasons against believing, that they may fortify themselves still more in their Incredulity, than of those which might oblige them to believe. The disposition of Mind in which they are, gives them as much relish for the former Reasons as it does Contempt and Aversion for the latter: Those always appear to them convincing and decisive; and these in their Opinion do not deserve their attention.

*The reason of  
this difference*

Experience does sufficiently confirm this Truth: We see daily that the most inconsiderable Authority, the least appearance of Probability, makes more impression upon most People against believing, than the most evident Reasons and most considerable Authority, which would persuade them to believe; and the reason of this difference is, that these former Motives however weak and inconsiderable, favour the natural inclination Men have to incredulity, and the latter are intirely contrary to it.

*Confirm'd by  
Experience.*

Give me leave, Sir, to instance in the Authority

H

*Instances of  
this Truth ta-  
ken from the  
Author himself.*

thority of Mr. *Van-Dale*, and to request that you would tell me sincerely, why this, which certainly is on no account very considerable, and which in the Matter in question you ought at least to suspect very much, has yet prevail'd in your Judgment over that of all the Fathers of the Church, of the Christians of all Ages, and of the most judicious Heathens themselves; and his frivolous and ridiculous Conjectures, over all the solid Proofs which the Fathers have brought to maintain their Opinion? I see no other Reason of this, but that Inclination you and I have to Incredulity: You do not easily believe whatever has any thing of wonderful in it. As you have own'd <sup>i</sup> that to be a weakness of the Mind of Man, you endeavour to exempt your self from it. Only in Natural Philosophy you appear very different from your self; for when you would establish a Plurality of Worlds, and place Inhabitants in the Planets and all the other <sup>k</sup> Stars; then you seem extremely pleas'd with what is wonderful, and have a great mind to believe it.

But to return to our subject. I have shewn you in the first Part of this Answer, that you was not well inform'd of the Reasons, which the Primitive Christians had to believe, that Devils were the Authors of Oracles. Indeed I am afraid a great many, who have not so much esteem for you as I, and see the Mistakes you

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<sup>i</sup> Histoire des Oracles. 1. Dissert. c. 3. p. 16. & Edit. Par. p. 30. Je pourrois aux raisons que j'ay apportées en ajouter une quatrième, aussi bonne peut-être que toutes les autres, c'est que dans le Systeme des Oracles rendus par les Demons il y a du merveilleux, & si l'on a un peu étudié l'esprit humain, on sçait quelle force le merveilleux a sur lay.

<sup>k</sup> See Les Entretiens sur la Pluralité des Mondes, by the same Author.

have committed in citing *Eusebius* and *Porphyry*, may think you have spoke of those Authors, and never read them with due care. May not I therefore conclude from thence against you, that they who do not believe, don't much trouble themselves to learn the Reasons for believing?

The following Chapter in which you pre-CHAP. III.  
tend to prove, \* *That the Primitive Christians* The Primitive  
*themselves were not sufficiently persuaded, that Ora-* Christians were  
*cles were deliver'd by Devils*, furnishes me with acquainted  
a new Argument for what I have just now said. with the Rea-  
sons, which  
† *Eusebius*, you say, in the beginning of his might induce  
*fourth Book de Præparatione Evangelicâ* does at them not to be-  
lieve, that De-  
vils were the  
Authors of Ora-  
cles.  
|| *I grant however, (you add a little after) that tho'*  
*Eusebius so well knew all that could dissuade Men*  
*from believing them supernatural, yet he ascrib'd*  
*them to Devils notwithstanding.* By this you see  
at least, that they who believe, may be very  
well acquainted with the Reasons they might  
have against believing: And what you grant  
concerning *Eusebius*, you ought also to grant  
concerning all the learned Christians, that have  
liv'd since him, and read his Works. There  
they thoroughly inform'd themselves of the  
Reasons they had against believing, that Devils  
were the Authors of Oracles. Why then did  
they believe this notwithstanding all these Rea-  
sons, which appear so excellent in your Eyes?  
Why more especially did not *Eusebius* ascribe  
Oracles to the cheats of Idolatrous Priests? The

\* Hist. Dissert. 1. ch. 9. p. 114.

† Hist. ibid. p. 116.

|| Hist. ibid. p. 117.

Poor reasoning  
on this Subject  
unjustly impu-  
ted to Eusebi-  
us.

Answer you make for him is this: \* *I see very well, that all Oracles may have been nothing but Imposture. Yet I will not believe they were nothing else. Why? Because I like that Devils should be employ'd in them. This, you say, is a very poor sort of reasoning.* It is true, this reasoning is poor, but whose reasoning is it? Yours, or *Eusebius's*? Is it true then, that he brought no other Reasons for his Opinion, but his humour? And to what end does he employ three whole Books of this Work, the fourth, fifth, and sixth, unless it be to prove his Opinion at large, by a great number of Reasons and Authorities, which he recapitulates in his fifth Book *de Demonstratione*? How could you omit this, if you have read it? But you had not leisure to read it. You entirely referr'd your self for this to what Mr. *Van-Dale* has taken of it into his Book. You were convinc'd by the great number of Passages, † *which he cites, you say, very faithfully, and translates with a wonderful Exactness, when he takes them from the Greek: Tho' 'tis evident he has for the most part only copy'd them, as he found them in the old Translations.* Now does not all this manifestly prove, that they who do not believe, don't trouble themselves to learn the Reasons for believing?

Why Origen  
and Eusebius,  
tho' very well  
acquainted  
with all that  
might induce  
them to believe,  
that Devils  
were not the  
Authors of Ora-  
cles, did yet  
both believe and  
teach, that  
they were.

You also produce a Passage of *Origen* to shew, that the Primitive Christians were not over much persuaded, that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils: But either you read him with no more care than you did *Eusebius*; or you again conceal that this Passage is immediately follow-  
ed † by Reasons, which convinc'd him of this

\* Hist. ibid. p. 118.

† Hist. Pref. p. 3.

Origines L. vii. contra Celsum.

matter. You think it strange that He and *Eusebius* knew what might be said to shew, that Oracles were nothing but the impostures of Idolatrous Priests, and yet did not embrace this Opinion. The Reason of this is plain, *viz.* that having examin'd it, they did not find it conformable to Truth; that they did not doubt, but among the multitude of Oracles that had been before and since the Birth of our Lord, there were some that were nothing in reality but mere cheats, as those which *Eusebius* <sup>m</sup> says were discover'd in his time; that lastly after the manner of all other Writers, they were willing to take the advantage of all that could be said against Oracles, and to report whatever might serve to cry them down, yet always keeping themselves to that Opinion, which they judg'd truest and most agreeable to what they had learnt from the Scripture.

This is also the conduct which *Clemens Alex-* *Clemens Alex-*  
*andrinus* observ'd in the Passage you cite from *andrinus was*  
 him. He there relates all the sorts of Divina- *not of a differ-*  
 tion which were in use among the Heathens; *ent Opinion con-*  
 and as there were some that were only Impos- *cerning Oracles*  
 tures, without entering at all into the particu- *from the rest of*  
 lars, or enquiring whether these Impostures *the Primitive*  
 came from Devils, or only from Men, he gives *Christians,*  
 this Name to all of them in general. But to  
 shew you clearly, that in this point he was not  
 of a different Opinion from all other learned  
 Christians, if you take the pains to read his  
*Admonitio ad Gentes*, in which the Passage you  
 cite is to be found; you will see that after he  
 had prov'd at large, that the Heathen Gods

<sup>m</sup> Euseb. L. iv. Præp. Evang. c. 2. sub finem p. 135. &  
 L. ix. Hist. Eccles. c. 11.

“ were only cruel and sanguinary Devils; he says, “ I can shew you Men that were better “ than your Gods, I mean, than your Devils, “ as *Cyrus* and *Salon*, who without contradiction “ were preferable to your *Apollo*. This God “ loves Presents, but he does not love Men. “ He betray’d *Cræsus* who was his Friend, “ without calling to mind the Presents he had “ receiv’d from him. He glory’d in leading “ him to his Funeral Pile, by obliging him to “ pass the River *Halys*. Thus Devils lead those they love, to the Fire.

You see, *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks of the famous Oracle ° of *Apollo* of *Delphos*, which was the cause of *Cræsus*’s losing his Kingdom, and had even cost him his life, if *Cyrus* had not been more merciful, than the Devil that deliver’d this Oracle. This Author then believ’d as all the rest, that Devils were the Authors of Oracles; and by consequence you ought to own, that of all the Primitive Christians there is not one of your Opinion.

° *Clemens Alexandrinus*. *Admonit. ad Gentes*. p. 26. *Φέρε δὴ ἔν κ’ ἐντα προδιδῶμεν, ὡς ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων κ’ ἡμισάνθρωποι δαίμονες εἰεν ὑμῶν οἱ θεοί, καὶ ἔχει μόνον ἐπιχαίροντες τῇ φρενοβλαδίᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, πρὸς τὸ καὶ ἀνθρωποκτονίας ἀσπλαγόντες. &c. p. 28. Αὐτίκα γὰρ ἔχω σοι Βελήϊον τὸ ὑμῶν ἀπάν τεττων θεῶν, καὶ δαίμόνα, ἐμδεδίκαται καὶ ἀνθρώπων καὶ Ἀπόλλωνος καὶ μαρτυρῶ, καὶ Κίον καὶ Σόλων. Φιλόδοξος ὑμῶν ὁ Φοῖβος, ἀλλ’ ὁ φιλόανθρωπος. πρὸς δὲ καὶ Κρείσον τὸ φίλον, καὶ τὸ μὴ ἐκλαθῶμεν, ἔγω φιλόδοξος ἦν. ἀνήγαγε καὶ Κρείσον διὰ τὸ Ἄλυσιν ἐπὶ τὸ πνεῦμα. ἔγω φιλόεις οἱ δαίμονες ὁδηγοῦσιν εἰς τὸ πῦρ. Vide Eundem. L. 1. Strom.*

° *Κρείσας* Ἄλυσιν διαβάς μεγάλῳ ἀρχῇ διαλύσας. Vide Herodotum. L. 1. Hist. Istud verò Oraculum sic Latine reddidit. Cicero L. 2, de Divin. p. 4896.

*Cræsus* *Halys* penetrans magnam perverset opum vim.

I come now to your second Proof, which you draw from the Circumstances that accompany'd Oracles. The first Circumstance of which you take notice, is \* that it was very easie to corrupt them, which, you say, plainly shews, that Men were concern'd in the thing. Hereupon you mention the saying of Demosthenes <sup>P</sup> concerning the Delphick Pythia, whom he accus'd of favouring the interests of Philip; the cheat of <sup>q</sup> Cleomenes to make the same Priestess say, that Demaratus King of Lacedemon was not Aristo's Son; and some other like Instances.

To answer this, I desire you to suppose for one Moment, that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils. And I ask you, whether upon this supposition it had not been full as easie to corrupt them? Who I beseech you, would have hinderd the Priestesses of Delphos from forging Oracles in favour of the King of Macedon? Could not she counterfeit her self inspir'd, as she immediately undertook to do <sup>r</sup> with regard to

CHAP. IV.  
That Oracles were easily corrupted. This an ill Argument, to prove that Devils were not the Authors of them.

Nothing hinder'd the false Prophets of the Devil from forging false Oracles.

\* Hist. Diff. I. ch. 10. p. 124.

<sup>P</sup> Cicero. L. 2. De Divin. p. 4897. Demosthenes quidem qui abhinc annos propè trecentos fuit, jam tum φιλιππίζον Pythiam dicebat, id est, quasi cum Philippo facere. Hoc autem cò spectabat ut eam à Philippo corruptam diceret.

<sup>q</sup> Herodotus. L. 6. p. 223. Ἐνθαῦτα περσσοίης Κλεομένης Κόβωνα τ' Ἀεισοφάνην, ἄνδρα ἐν Δελφοῖσι δῶμασδ' ὄντα μέγιστον· ὃ δ' Κόβων Πειάλλαν τ' ἐπρόμαλιν ἀναπέθῃ τὰ Κλεομένης ἐβυλδέοντες· λέγειν· ἦτοι δὴ ἡ Πυθίη, ἐπειρωμένων τ' ἀποτρέπων, ἔκεινε μὴ Ἀείσανθ' Ἰν Διμάρεϊον παῖδα· ὑστέρω μ' τοι χερσὶν ἀνάπυσσας ἔβυλόν ταῦτα, καὶ Κόβωνις ἔρουσε ἐν Δελφῶν, καὶ Πειάλλα δ' ἐπρόμαλιν ἐπαύδῃ τ' τιμῆς.

<sup>r</sup> Lucan. L. v. Pharsal. p. 130.

— Illa pavens adyti penetrabile remoti  
Fatidicum, primâ templorum in parte resistit,

to *Appius*, who consulted her about the Success of the *Pharsalian* War? Could she not say, that the God or the *Demon* which possess'd her, when she was sitting upon the *Tripus*, had made her tell such or such a thing, tho' there was nothing in it? Did not the Prophets of the old Testament, altho' inspir'd by God, suffer themselves to be sometimes corrupted in the same manner? And thro' the complaisance they had for Princes, or for the People, did they not give them Answers and Oracles, as from God himself, which really did not come from him? Did they not say, *The Lord has said*, tho' *the Lord had not sent them*, as he complains of them himself by the Mouth of his other Prophets, more pious and more faithful than they? Is this a sufficient Argument, that all the other Oracles deliver'd by these too much temporizing Prophets were only cheats and forg'd predictions?

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Atq; Deum simulans, sub pectore ficta quieto  
Verba referi, nullo confusæ murmure vocis  
Instinctam sacro mentem testata furore,  
Haud æquè læsura Ducem, cui falsa cænebat,  
Quàm Tripodas Phœbiq; fidem.—

<sup>r</sup> Jerem. xiv. 13, 14. *Ab Lord God, behold the Prophets say unto them, ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place. Then the Lord said unto me, The Prophets prophesy lies in my name, I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of naught, and the deceit of their heart. And Chap. xxiii. 16, 17. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, hearken not unto the words of the Prophets, that prophesy unto you; they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the Mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord has said. And V. 21. I have not sent these Prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. And V. 31. Behold I am against the Prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith; &c.*

Did not the Prophet of *Bethel* mention'd in the first Book of *Kings*, give two Answers almost at the same time as coming both from God? The one false and forg'd by him, to deceive another Prophet who was come to foretel the Destruction of *Jeroboam's* Altar; the other true, and indeed inspir'd by God himself, whereby he foretold to the same Prophet, that for the Punishment of his Disobedience he should be depriv'd of the Sepulchre of his Fathers. Since therefore it was possible to corrupt the Prophets of God himself; since They could forge Prophecies, is it strange that Men have been able to corrupt the false Prophets of the Devil? Is it a wonder that they have forg'd Oracles? And if the false Prophecies which true Prophets sometimes deliver'd of their own Head, did not hinder them from being otherwise true Prophets, whom God often inspir'd; why should false Oracles forg'd by Idolatrous Priests make you conclude, that they were not often possess'd by the Devil, and that there was nothing but meer Cheat in all their Answers?

This supposes, as you see, that it was possible to corrupt or counterfeit Oracles, which I doubt not, did often happen: Yet I may ven-

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<sup>1</sup> *1 Kings* xiii. 18. *He said unto him: I am a Prophet also as thou art, and an Angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread, and drink water: but he lyed unto him. V. 19. So he went back with him — V. 20. And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came unto the Prophet that brought him back. V. 21. And he cryed unto the man of God, that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the Mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the Commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee. V. 22. — Thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.*

ture

ture to say, that you do not prove this by any thing you alledge in this Chapter. It seems indeed that you there suppose, that Devils being the Authors of Oracles, should always have given Answers full of Wisdom and Moderation, and never have favour'd the Passions of Princes as they have done. \* *If Devils deliver'd Oracles,* say you, *they were not wanting in complaisance to Princes who were once become formidable; and it may be observ'd that Hell had a great regard for Alexander, and for Augustus.* Hell was in the wrong no doubt, to flatter *Alexander's* Ambition in making him pass for the Son of *Jupiter*, and thereby inciting him to carry Fire and Sword through all parts of the World, in order to make himself Master of it. Was it the interest of Devils to act otherwise, and make this young Conqueror more wise and more moderate?

*The Author seems to suppose, that Devils must have always utter'd Oracles full of Wisdom and Moderation.*

The Oracle was consulted upon the Marriage of *Augustus*, who took away *Livia* from her Husband, when with Child. The Oracle answer'd *no*, that never Marriage succeeded better, than when the Person espous'd was with Child before hand. On which you cry out with Reason, † *This however seems to me a strange Maxim.* Indeed what could the Devils mean by delivering such a Maxim? It does not at all agree with them; sure some Body has maliciously father'd it upon them, on purpose to discredit them. How could they choose

\* Hist. ibid. p. 126, 127.

† Prudentius L. 1. contra Symm. l. 260.

— Mox editur inter

Fescennina, novo proles aliena marito.

Idq; Deam sortes & Apollinis antra dederunt

Consilium, nunquam melius nam cedere tædas

Responsum est, quàm cum præguans nova nupta jugatur;

† Hist. ibid. p. 129.

but see, that in warranting the Passion of *Augustus* they encourag'd a great number of People to imitate him ; and like him, to violate the most sacred Rights? What Shame must redound to them from thence ? What Loss and what Desolation to Hell in general ?

The second Circumstance which makes you say, that Oracles were only Cheats, is that new ones were from time to time set up, as those of *Hephestion*, *Antinoüs*, and *Augustus*. You think it plain that these new Oracles could be only the Cheats of Men : From whence you conclude, that we must form the same Judgment of those that were more ancient. I doubt whether the comparifon you make of these new Oracles with the ancient, be altogether just ; and though it were, I should think it would prove no great matter. In the first place, it is not very sure that *Hephestion*, *Antinoüs*, and *Augustus* did deliver Oracles in the Temples, which were consecrated to them after their Death : And the Authors you cite to prove it give us leave at least to doubt of it.

Indeed *Lucian* \* only saith, That the Flat-terers of *Alexander* seeing how far his Passion for *Hephestion* went, omitted nothing that was capable of entertaining and augmenting it ; relating I know not how many Apparitions of

CHAP. V.  
Another bad reason brought by the Author of the History, to prove that Oracles were only cheats : viz. that new ones were from time to time set up.

It is not certain that *Hephestion*, *Antinoüs*, or *Augustus* did deliver Oracles in the Temples consecrated to them after their death.

\* *Lucianus*. L. Quòd non facìle credendum sit Calumniz. p. 882. Ὅτι πολὺ μὲν αὐτοῖς ὅτι οἱ κλέαντες ἡ μετὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἑλπίδα ἐπιθυμίας, προσεξέτασαν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἀνεξάρτητον, ἀνέστη δὲ τὸν αὐτοῦ ἡ ἑλπίδα, ἐπὶ τῷ αὐτοῦ τινὰς καὶ ἰαμβὰ προσάπλοισι αὐτῷ, καὶ μαρτυρίας ἐπισημαίνοντες, καὶ τέλος ἔθουον παρὶς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀλεξικακῶν θεῶν. ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος ἠδὲ τὸ τε ἀκέραιον καὶ τὰ τελευτήσια ἐπέσει, καὶ μετὰ ἐννομήν, ὡς αὐτοῦ καὶ θεῶν παῖς ἀνὴρ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ θεῶν ποιεῖν δυνατὸς.

this new God, ascribing Cures to him, and extolling his Oracles. Who does not see that *Lucian* delivers all this only as Lies, which these Courtiers boldly gave out, to make their Court the better to their Master? He ridicules the base Complaisance of these worthless Flatterers, and the foolish Presumption of *Alexander*, who not only \* *believ'd himself a God*, but that he was powerful enough to make others so.

*Spartianus* likewise \* does not say that *Antinoid's* deliver'd Oracles, but only that the Greeks, to please *Adrian* who would have it so, put him into the number of their Gods, and affirm'd also that he deliver'd Oracles. These again are Lies which Flattery gives out. *Spartianus* was so much persuaded of it, that he made no difficulty to add, that the Answers in Verse which went about under the name of this new Deity, were thought to be compos'd by *Adrian* himself: So far were Men from believing that they were deliver'd by *Antinoid's*, or by his Priests.

You say farther, that this Emperor caus'd a City to be built to this new God call'd † *Andrinopolis*. I do not question but you writ *Antinopolis*. It is a Fault of the Press which ought to be corrected, because it might occasion a gross mistake, and make us confound *Andrinopolis* a City of *Thrace*, with *Antinopolis* in *Egypt*. It is true, *Stephanus Byzantinus* † says it was

\* Hist. Diss. I. ch. II. p. 137.

\* *Spartianus* in vitâ *Hadriani*. p. 248. Et Græci quidem volente *Hadriano* eum consecraverunt, Oracula per eum dari asserentes, quæ *Hadrianus* ipse composuisse jactatur.

† Hist. ibid.

† *Stephanus Byzantinus*. V. Ἀντινεία. Ἀντινεία πόλις Αἰγυπτῶ, καὶ Ἀντινός παῖς ὅς — ἐκλήθη ἡ πόλις καὶ Ἀδριανόπολις.

also call'd *Adrianopolis* from his Name that built it, but I dont think that a sufficient Reason for giving it the Name of *Andrinopolis*.

The Oracle of *Augustus* is no more certain, than those of *Hephestion* and *Antinou's*. What has led you to maintain this, is a little Jest of the Poet *Prudentius* <sup>2</sup>, who to ridicule the Heathen Gods, which were all the Work of Mens Hands, says that the *Romans* following that Example, had also made the Emperor *Augustus* a God, erecting a Temple and consecrating Priests to him, offering him Sacrifices, prostrating themselves before his Altar, and desiring his Answers. I am apt to think, these Answers were rather those which the Southsayers gave relating to the Success of Sacrifices, when they had inspected the Entrails of the Victims, than Oracles, such as the false Prophets of the Idols deliver'd by the Voice of Madness and Enthusiasm. But however 'tis a Poet who speaks, and who by many Circumlocutions, which all signify almost the same thing, would only give us to understand that *Augustus* was acknowledg'd for a Deity.

But grant that all these new Deities had in reality deliver'd Oracles, and were consulted about things to come, what can you draw from thence that will be any Advantage to your Opinion? How can you thence conclude, that the ancient Oracles were only Cheats of Idolatrous Priests? Should not you first have prov'd, that

*Tho' these new Deities had utter'd Oracles, yet there is no reason why we may not attribute these Oracles to the Devil, as well as those which were more ancient.*

<sup>2</sup> Prudentius. L. 1. contra Symmachum. l. 245.

Hunc morem veterum docili jam ætate secuta  
Posteritas, mense, atq; adytis, & flamine, & aris  
Augustum coluit, vitulo placavit & agno.  
Strata ad Pulvinar jacuit, responsa poposcit  
Testantur tituli, produnt consulta Senatus,  
Cæsareum Jovis ad speciem statuentia Templum.

those

those latter Oracles were only the Impostures of these Priests? But this is what you have not done, and what I believe you cannot do easily; because I do not see what could hinder the Devils from seizing upon the Temples of these new Deities, and vending their Impostures and Delusions there, as in all the rest, where they had pronounc'd Oracles for so many Ages past. Are they us'd to be supine in their Interests, and to neglect any Opportunities of seducing Men, and enlarging their own Empire? And were the Priests of these modern Idols more upright Men, less Superstitious, and less addicted to *Magick* than the others? Were they less acquainted with all the Secrets of *Theurgy*, and with the manner of calling forth their Gods and *Demons*, and obliging them to give Answers?

\* *Without doubt, say you, these new Oracles occasion'd those to make Reflections, who were the least able to make them: Was there not ground enough to believe they were of the same Nature with those of more Antiquity? Why then has no ancient Author made these Reflections which were so easily made? How came it that no Body happen'd to judge of the ancient Oracles by these new ones, and to produce these to shew that those were only Cheats? Should not the Christians especially have done this? Yet Origen<sup>s</sup>, who speaks largely enough about Anti-*  
*νομίαι,*

\* Hist. ibid. p. 138.

\* Origenes. L. 3. contra Celsum, p. 132. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπεὶ φιλαλήθως καὶ ἀδικῶς τὰ περὶ τῶν Ἀσίων ἐξήλθοι τις, μαγιστείας ἀν' Αἰγυπτίων καὶ τηλας ἀγορεύσας αἰτίας τῶν δοκούντων αὐτὸν ποιεῖν ἐν Ἀρτινῶν πόλει καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἐκείνων αἰτίας, ἐπὶ ἄλλων τοῦτον ἰσορροπῶν, καὶ Αἰγυπτίων καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα δεινῶν γεγενῆσθαι, ἐν τοῖς τοῖς δαίμονας

*mon*s and the divine Honours given him in Egypt, says that among the Prodigies attributed to him, there were some effected by the Imposture of the *Demon* that presided over his Temple. By which you see, that far from concluding from that of *Antinoüs*, that the more ancient Oracles were only cheats of Men, he acknowledg'd even in this the Operation of the evil Spirit.

But you add, \* *To judge of the Original of the Original of the Oracles of Amphiaraius, of Trophonius, and of Apollo himself, was it not sufficient to see those of Antinoüs, Hephestion, and Augustus?* The ancient Oracles of which you speak, might have had the same Original with these new ones; that is to say, Flattery, Superstition, and Idolatry: But that does not hinder but that Devils, for the farther increase of Idolatry, might concern themselves both in one and t'other. I know this seems incredible to you, but that proceeds from your having, upon this Subject, fram'd Notions to your self which are not just. † *It would, you say, be very strange and surprizing, that nothing more should be requisite than a Humour of Alexander's, to put the Devil into possession of an Image.* It seems you are ignorant of the Reasons, which led the Devils to possess themselves of the Temples where

δαίμονας μυστικὰς ἢ ἰασηκὰς, πολλαὶς ἢ καὶ βασιλεύον-  
τας καὶ δοκῶντας τι πρᾶξις ἐκτελεῖν οὐδὲ τὸ τυχεύοντων  
Βραμύτων — τοῖς δὲ δὲ καὶ ἐν Ἀθηναῖς πόλει τῇ Ἀι-  
γυπτίῃ νομισθεῖς ἦν θεός. ἔαρεσθαι οἱ μὲν τινες καὶ δῖον  
τεσσὶν (ὧν τις καὶ ἀφ' αὐτῶν), ἕτεροι δὲ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἰδρυμένων  
δαίμονος ἀπαλῶν, καὶ ἄλλοι καὶ ἀδερῶν τῶν (καὶ αὐτῶν)  
τῶν ἐλεσχημένων, οἷον τινὲν δεύλατον καὶ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν  
πομπῶν.

\* Hist. ibid. p. 138.

† Hist. ibid. p. 146, 147.

Oracles were deliver'd, and of the Persons who deliver'd them. You need search for no other Reasons than their own Malice; the desire they have to destroy Mankind, and alienate them from the Knowledge and Worship of the True God; their Ambition to make themselves honour'd as Gods, and equal themselves to the Almighty. You might have learn'd these Reasons from the Fathers<sup>b</sup>, who took them out of the Scripture; and thereby you would have known, that the Devils had both the Power and the Desire to concern themselves with the Oracle of *Hephestion*, as well as with all the rest.

CHAP. VI.  
The Author of  
the History  
undertakes to  
persuade whole  
Nations of the  
grossest Errors.

I add one word concerning the manner, in which you say again, the first Oracles were establish'd. \* Give me, say you, but half a

<sup>b</sup> Cyprian. L. de Idolorum Vanitate. p. 13, 14. Spiritus insincri & vagi, qui postea quàm terrenis vitiis immersi sunt — non desinunt perdiri perdere, & depravati errorem pravitatis infundere — Nec aliud illis studium est, quàm a Deo homines avocare, & ad superstitionem sui ab intellectu veræ religionis avertere.

Tertull. in Apolog. cap. 22. p. 21, 22. Operatio eorum est hominis subversio. — & quæ illis accuratior pascua est, quàm ut hominem à recogitatu veræ Divinitatis avertant præstigitis falsæ Divinationis? — Æmulantur Divinitatem dum furantur divinationem.

Lactant. L. ii. c. 16. p. 107. Illi autem (Angeli) qui desciverunt à Dei ministerio, quia sunt veritatis inimici & prævaricatores, Dei nomen sibi, & cultum Deorum vindicare conantur. Non quòd ullum honorem desiderent (quis enim honor perditis est?) nec ut Deo noceant, cui noceri non potest; sed ut hominibus, quos nituntur à cultu & notitiâ veræ Majestatis avertere, ne immortalitatem adipisci possint, quam ipsi suâ nequitia perdiderunt. Offundunt itaq; tenebras, & veritatem caligine obducunt, ne dominum, ne Patrem suum nòrint, & ut illiciant, facile in templis se occultant, & sacrificiis omnibus præsto adsunt, eduntq; sæpe prodigia, quibus obstupescit homines fidem commodent simulacris Divinitatis & Numinis.

\* Hist. ibid. p. 142, 143.

*dozen Persons, whom I may be able to persuade, that it is not the Sun which makes the Day, and I shall not despair of whole Nations embracing this Opinion.* I know not very well what you mean by that, nor whether your pique be only against Oracles. But this I know, that a very learned and understanding Person of my acquaintance, having seen this passage of your Book, found some venom hidden in it, which gave him great offence. But without staying to penetrate into your Intentions, I desire you to tell me, if you have found in History any example of an Errour of this kind, establish'd in the manner you mention. Sure you build very much upon the stupidity of Men. Yet it seems to me, that they do not so easily give themselves up to all that one would persuade them, particularly in things contrary to their sense and experience. If they have never so little wit and understanding, they require Proofs and Reasons. Nor is this all. They also upon these occasions desire Wonders and Miracles, either true, or at least appearing to be so. It would indeed be a very great curiosity, to see which way you would go to work, to persuade five or six Persons, that it is not the Sun which makes the Day: And when you should have gain'd your point, it would be yet a greater curiosity, to see what way these five or six Persons would take, to persuade whole Nations of the same Errour. They must for this purpose be at the same time infinitely stupid, and extremely ingenious, to give themselves up to so gross and palpable an Errour, and yet be able to persuade whole Nations of it.

*This chimerical  
Notion confut-  
ed.*

You say, that \* *at the time Oracles were esta-*

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\* Hist. ibid. p. 144.

There were some Oracles set up in the Ages of most knowledge: And those that were more ancient, continu'd in all their splendour during those very Ages.

blish'd, mankind was much more ignorant than afterward. But first, all Oracles were not establish'd at the same time. I can shew you some that were establish'd in the Ages of most knowledge, and for this I need no more than your own testimony. You acknowledg \* that the Oracles of *Hephestion*, *Antinoüs*, and *Augustus* were as true as those of greater antiquity, tho' not so famous; and when were these Oracles establish'd, but in the Ages most cultivated by Sciences and Philosophy? But tho' all Oracles had been establish'd in Ages of ignorance, did not they subsist during those of most knowledge? How was it possible that so many learned Men, so many great Philosophers, so many flourishing Kingdoms, Cities, and Republicks should never perceive, that they had only been impos'd upon by some cheats, who upon all accounts knew much less of the matter than they? How could these cheats and impostors succeed each other without interruption, and conceal their game so well for above 2000 Years, that no body ever discover'd it? Were They of a different Species from the rest of Mankind that liv'd in their times? Were They all born infinitely skillful and cunning, and the rest stupid and befottled

It is not possible they should have subsisted so long, if they had been nothing but the mere imposture of Idolatrous Priests.

\* Hist. ibid. p. 138, 139.

• It is hard to determine the precise time of the rise of Oracles. It is very probable they began almost as soon as Idolatry. That is the opinion of the Fathers, and Divines, who attribute the progress of Idolatry to these kinds of deluding artifices of the Devil. It is certain Oracles were in use at the time of the Trojan War, as is seen in Homer. Ovid makes Deucalion and Pyrrha consult the Oracle of Themis, after the Deluge which happen'd in their time. The Holy Scripture does in Moses's time forbid the Israelites the use of Oracles, among the other sorts of Divination practis'd by the Pagans, and that sometimes under the name of Pythons (or familiar Spirits), and sometimes in other terms, which signify'd the same thing, that we understand by Oracles.

to the last degree? By what artifice were they able to contrive, that the thought and knowledge, of which all the rest of Mankind were destitute, should have been given only to them?

Yet if these Impostors had by their Oracles *And that the rather, because these Oracles often enjoy'd the most barbarous Cruelties, and such as were most likely to set all Men against them.* commanded nothing, but what was agreeable to the Inclinations of those that consulted them, it might be said there was no need of any great capacity to impose upon People, who were glad to be deceiv'd, and that even drew some advantage from their Errour. But far from that, these Impostors oblig'd them continually to a great number of superfluous Expences, of which themselves only reap'd the Benefit; and often forc'd them to give up even their Children to be sacrific'd without mercy to their Idols. Fathers were seen to deliver up their Sons, and Cities to dispeople themselves every Year of their most flourishing Youth, to obey these Impostors. Kings and Princes<sup>d</sup> were the first that submitted to them: For these profligate wretches were not always contented with *Plebeian* Blood; they often requir'd that which was most illustrious, and most noble. They were furnish'd at their choice with Victims of each Sex, Age, and Condition, to be massacred in publick. None dar'd to oppose it. On the contrary every Man accounted it a Merit to contribute to these bloody Executions, as to Acts of Religion, which they believ'd agreeable to their Gods. Could Men be stupid and blind to such a de-

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<sup>d</sup> *Everyone knows the Stories of Iphigenia, Polyxena, Menœceus, and Codrus, who were sacrific'd in different manners by command of the Oracles. To these Examples may be added those of Erectheus King of Athens, of Marius and Metellus Romans, who deliver'd up their Daughters to be sacrific'd; and many other such like related in History.*

gree, if they were not made so by Devils? Indeed the utmost that we can think, these evil Spirits could do by their Impostures, was to obtain such Sacrifices. We should not believe such barbarities \* could ever have been committed, even supposing they were the Authors of them, if History did not assure us, that they were in use before the Birth of Christ almost in all the Countries of the World. And shall we believe that meer Cheats would commit them in cold Blood, and could be able by deluding artifices to blind and bewitch the whole Earth after so prodigious a manner?

CHAP. VII. Let us see now what means they employ'd to impose with so much Cruelty upon all Mankind; let us enter into the particulars of those so well concerted Cheats, with which you have furnish'd them, to represent their ridiculous Comedies and their bloody Tragedies. They must needs have been very finely spun, and of infinite subtilty to have impos'd for more than 2000 Years upon the most intelligent People and Nations: They were, as you have conceiv'd them after Mr. *Van-Dale*, such as these.

*The Cheats examin'd, by means of which the Author supposes, that idolatrous Priests seduc'd the People.*

Some Oracles were deliver'd by way of Enthusiasm and Madness, with which the Idolatrous Priests and Priestesses seem'd to be fill'd at the time they pronounc'd them, after some

\* Lactant. L. i. c. 21. p. 51. Tam barbaros tam immanes fuisse homines, ut parricidium suum, id est tetrum atque execrabile humano generi facinus, sacrificium vocarent. Cum teneras atque innocentes animas, quæ maximè est ætas parentibus dulcior, sine ullo respectu pietatis extinguere, immanitatemque omnium bestiarum, quæ tamen fetus suos amant, feritæ superarent. O dementiam insanabilem! Quid illis isti Dii amplius facere possent, si essent iracundissimi, quàm faciunt propitii? Cum suos cultores parricidii inquinant, orbicibus mactant, humanis sensibus spoliant.

Preparations and Ceremonies that were thought necessary for this purpose. And this was the most common and ordinary way of delivering Oracles. Some were given in a Dream to such as went to Sleep in the Temples of certain Deities, that they might there find Remedies for their Diseases, or receive Answers to their Doubts. And Oracles were often consulted upon Letters seal'd up, and brought back in the same manner, with the Answers given after one or other of those two ways. Hereto you add their Lotts, which were of more than one kind, and some of them like Dice. You also add those sorts of Prodigies, in which the Idols were seen to stir of themselves, to come forward and raise themselves up into the Air.

The first sort, according to you, came only from the Priests \*, who hid themselves in the Images, and speaking by their Mouths, counterfeited the Voice and Language of the Gods : The second were † the effect of some Drugs proper to cause Dreams. As to the third ‡, the Priests had found the Secret of unsealing the Letters, and afterwards sealing them up again, so that none could perceive they had been open'd. You explain the Lots, by saying, that without doubt \* *the Priests knew how to manage the Dice.* As to the extraordinary Motions of the Images, you say, † *You will not trouble yourself to explain how they could act such kind of Puppet-shews.* Nor will I, in particularly confusing these two last so far fetch'd and subtile Explications, which you give of the Lots, and of

*What these Cheats were in his Opinion.*

\* Hist. Diss. I. c. 12. p. 158.

† Hist. Diss. I. c. 15. p. 191.

‡ Hist. Diss. I. c. 14. p. 173.

\* Hist. Diss. I. c. 18. p. 208, 209.

† Hist. *ibid.* p. 213.

the Motions of the Images. Besides that they don't deserve it, that would be a Digression from my Subject, which only respects Oracles properly so call'd: And what I shall say of the rest will be sufficient to shew how ridiculous these two Explications are, without entring any farther into particulars.

*How he explains the most usual way in which Oracles were deliver'd.*

I return then to the first sort of Oracles, which were the most famous and the most common. To prove the ingenious Explication you give of them, you observe, \* That the Temples where they were deliver'd were all situated in *Countries mountainous, and by consequence full of Grots and Caverns*; that when these Temples were situated in lower Countries, † *instead of Natural Caverns they made Artificial ones*: That those were || *the Sanctuaries, where they said, the Deity of the Temple resided, and where none ever enter'd but the Priests*; \* That in these Sanctuaries all the Machines of the Priests were hid, and that they enter'd into them by *subterranean Passages*: That the † Oracle could be consulted only upon certain Days, because some time was necessary to prepare and accommodate their Engines: || That they had instituted certain Mysteries which engag'd the People to a profound Silence, and thereby provided for the security of the Priests, in case the Cheat should be discover'd. \* *Lastly, you say, to comprehend in one sole Reflection all that may be*

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\* Hist. Diff. 1. ch. 12. p. 147, 148.

† Hist. ibid. p. 151.

|| Hist. ibid.

\* Hist. ibid. p. 156.

† Hist. Diff. 1. ch. 13. p. 161.

|| Hist. ibid. p. 164.

\* Hist. ibid. p. 171, 172.

made thereupon; I would gladly have any one tell me, why the Devils could not foretel things to come, but in Caverns and obscure Places, and why they never attempted to animate an Image in a place of great Concourse, on all sides expos'd to the Eyes of the World.

I could give many particular Answers to all that you assert here without Proof, but I shall content my self with one general Answer, which will overthrow all those Machines with which you furnish the Idolatrous Priests, and render all those Caverns and subterranean Passages of no use, where you make them go to deliver their Oracles. 'Tis, that all this only tends to shew, that these Impostors did in Fact hide themselves in these Caverns, and crept through these subterranean Passages, unknown to all the World; and placing themselves in these Images, did through their Mouths utter the Answers they thought fit to give to the Questions propos'd to them. 'Tis for this purpose you also accommodate them with those sorts of Trumpets, that raise the Voice and multiply the Sound, the better to counterfeit the Voice of the Gods, and create Terror in the Minds of those who imagin'd they heard it. 'Tis for the same reason you look upon the History of the Priests of *Bel*, which is related in the Scripture, as a Precedent decisive in your favour: And from the subterraneous Passages, by which those Impostors went by Night to eat the Meats offer'd to their Gods, you demonstratively conclude, that the Priests of other Idols made use of the like Passages to go to the Images of their Gods, from whence they gave their Oracles. And it is for the same Reason that you ask, Why the Devil never thought fit to animate an Image, expos'd to the Eyes of all Men in a

*This Explication confuted. It is only founded in a Mistake, that the Priests hid themselves in the Images, to utter Oracles by their Mouths.*

place of general Concourse. By which you would have us understand, that it is evident they were not Devils but Priests, who animated Images, and utter'd Oracles through their Mouths, a Cheat which in your Opinion they might easily put in practice in obscure Places and subterraneous Passages, that conceal'd their conveying themselves into those Images, but not in a place of great Concourse, where they could not thus escape the Eyes of Men.

Oracles were  
not deliver'd by  
Images, but by  
the Priests  
themselves,  
transported  
with a Madness  
which they  
thought Divine.

But all this falls of its self, when Men are not under the same Mistake which you are, upon which, as I have already taken the Liberty to observe to you, you have built your System; and that is, to believe that Oracles were utter'd by Images; that it was Images which were animated and spoke, or at least seem'd to speak, and to be animated by a Deity. I have already shew'd you that all this was only a false Imagination and *Chimara*, and that Oracles were not thus utter'd; but that it was the idolatrous Priests and Priestesses, who deliver'd 'em themselves immediately, without the help of Images; appearing transported with that Madness which they call'd Divine, and believ'd to come from *Apollo*, or the Deity that inspir'd them. Consider in what manner *Virgil* makes the

<sup>f</sup> Virgil. L.vi. *Æneidos*. l. 45.

Ventum erat ad limen, cum virgo poscere fata  
Tempus, ait, Deus ecce Deus. Cui talia fanti  
Ante fores subito non vultus, non color unus,  
Non compæx mansere comæ, sed pectus anhelum  
Et rabie fera corda tument, majorq; videri  
Nec mortale sonans, afflata est numine quando  
Jam propiore Dei.—*Et paulo post*. l. 77.  
At, Phæbi nondum patiens, immanis in antro  
Bacchatur vates, magnum si pectore possit  
Excussisse Deum. Tanto magis ille fatigat  
Os rabidum, fera corda demans, &c.

Sybil of *Cuma*, and *Lucan* \* the Priestess of *Delphos* deliver Oracles, and all that both Christian and Heathen writers have said, when they treated of the Subject in question. You'll see there is not one, but what has made mention of this Enthusiasm, and said or suppos'd that they were the Priests and Priestesses themselves, and not the Images, that spoke and immediately deliver'd Oracles. You own this with respect to the Oracle of *Delphos*, but you add \*, *that in most of the rest this Madness was not necessary*: You were well aware, that this Madness which supposes *Men inspir'd*, did not agree with your system of *Images speaking*. But it will not be difficult for me to shew you, that this was essential to Oracles properly so call'd, of which we speak, and which were the most common and the most famous.

Indeed *Plato* \* owns Madness to be the cause

CHAP. VIII.

and All the ancient

Heathens own'd

Madness for

the principle, or

at least for a

necessary Cir-

cumstance of

Oracles proper-

ly so call'd.

Testimonies of

Plato, Cicero,

Aristotle, Por-

phyry, and

Iamblichus, in

this Case.

\* *Lucanus*. L. v. *Pharsaliæ*. p. 130.

——— *Tandem conterrita Virgo*  
*Confugit ad Tripodas, vastiq; adducta cavernis*  
*Hæsit, & insueto concepit pectore nuntium.*

P. 131. — *Baccharur demens aliena per antrum*  
*Colla ferens, vittaq; Dei Phæbeaq; ferra*  
*Erectis discussa comis, per inania templi*  
*Ancipiti cervice rotat, spargitq; vaganti*  
*Obstantes Tripodas, magnosq; excessuat igne* ———.  
*Spumea tum primum rabies vesana per ora*  
*Effluit, & gemitus, & anhelo clara meatu*  
*Murmura: tam mcestus vastis ululatus in antris,*  
*Extremæq; sonant domitâ jam virgine voces.*

\* *Plato* in *Phædro*. p. 244. Νῦν δὲ τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ἀσθεῶν  
ἡμῖν γίγνεται διὰ μανίας, δεῖα μὲν τοῖς θεοῖς διδουμένης·  
ἥ τε γὰρ δὴ ἐν ἀνθρώποις περὶ πάντας, αἰτ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν ἰέρειαι,  
μανέσσαι, καὶ πολλὰ δὴ καὶ παλὰ ἰδίασε καὶ δημοσίᾳ τῶν  
Ἑλλάδων ἀνθρώπων. Καρθευόμεναι δὲ βροτῶν, ἢ ἔδιν' καὶ  
ἑὸν δὴ λέγουσιν Σιβύλλαν τε καὶ ἄλλους, οὗτοι μαντικῇ  
χρῶμενοι

and principle of Divination in general, and shows in particular, that it is by that means, that the Priestesses of *Delphos* and of *Dodona*, the *Sybits*, and all those who have been esteem'd to have the gift of foretelling what is future, did deliver Oracles, from whence he pretends Men drew great Advantages. He adds, that the Antients made use of the same Word, to signify this Madness, and the Divination made by Oracles, because this was the Effect of the other. He owns <sup>1</sup> two sorts of Madness; one Natural, caus'd by a kind of Distemper; the other Supernatural, proceeding from a Divine Inspiration, which transports the Soul: And among the Four sorts of Supernatural Madness which he owns, he puts that which belongs to Oracles, and pretends *Apollo* is the Author of it; as *Bacchus*, of that which in his Mysteries transports the *Bacchanals*.

*Cicero* <sup>1</sup> in like manner distinguishes two sorts

χρῶνται ἐνθῷ, πολλὰ δὲ πολλοῖς πρῆλιν εἰς τὸ μέλλον ὀρθῶς — τὸδε μὲν ἄξιον ἐπιμαρτυρεῖται, ὅτι καὶ τὰ παλαιῶν οἱ ὀνύματα τιθῆναι, καὶ αἰχρὸν ἡχύντο ἐδὲ ὄνειδος μανίαν· καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῇ καλλίστῃ τέχνῃ, ἢ τὸ μέλλον κεῖναι, αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτὸ νόμα ἐμπλέκοντες μανικῶς ἐκάλουν, ἀλλ' ὡς καλῶ ὄνθῃ, ὅταν, θεῖα μοῖρα γίγνηται, ἔτω νομίσαντες ἔθεντο· οἱ δὲ νῦν ἀπερχόμενοι τὸ τὰν ἐπεμβαλόντες μανικῶς ἐκάλουν.

<sup>1</sup> Idem. *ibid.* paulo post medium. p. 265. Μανίας δὲ εἶδη δύο· ἡ μὲν, κατὰ νοσημάτων αἰσθητῶν· ἡ δὲ κατὰ θεῖας ἡλλαγῆς τῶν εἰωθότων νομίμων γίγνομιν — ἡ δὲ θεῖας τετραγῶν θεῶν τέτταρα μέρη διηρόμενοι· μανικῶς μὲν ἐπιπνοῖαν, Ἀπόλλωνος δὲ ψῆφον, Διονύσου δὲ τρυφίαν, μαρῶν δ' αὖ, πομπικῶς. &c.

<sup>1</sup> *Cicero*. L. 1. De Divin. p. 4806—7. Duo sunt enim divinandi genera, quorum alterum artis est, alterum naturæ: Quæ est autem Gens, aut quæ Civitas, quæ non aut exitis pecudum, aut monstra aut fulgura interpretantium, aut augurum aut Astrologorum aut sortium (ea enim ferè

artis

sorts of Divination ; one which he calls Artificial, as that made by Augurs and Southsayers, by Astrology and Lots ; and the other Natural ; because it does not require Art and Experience, as the former ; but proceeds from the Soul it self, either transported by Madness, from whence Oracles are caus'd ; or disengag'd from the Senses by sleep, from whence come prophetick Dreams. This Division, which he establishes in his first Book *de Divinatione*, runs thro' the remaining part of that Work, and throughout that he acknowledges Madness to be the cause of Oracles.

*Aristotle* <sup>1</sup> owns it to be so too ; but he pretends there is nothing supernatural in this Madness, but that it proceeds from a hot and inflam'd Choler, near the Seat of the Soul, or as he also says elsewhere, from the Vertue of the Exhalations of certain parts of the Earth.

*Porphyry* <sup>2</sup> speaking of such as foretel future Events by the way of Enthusiasm, brings several Examples : As the Priests of the Oracle of

artis sunt) aut somniorum aut vaticinationum (hæc enim duo naturalia putantur) prædictioque moveatur? Et L. 2. p. 4890. Ac me Peripateticorum ratio magis movebat, & veteris Dicæarchi, & ejus, qui nunc floret, Cratippi, qui censent esse in mentibus hominum tanquam Oraculum aliquos, ex quo futura præsentiant, si aut furore divino incitatus animus, aut somno relaxatus, solutus moveatur, & liberetur.

<sup>1</sup> *Aristot. Problem. Sect. 30. q. 1. & Lib. de Mundo locis supra relatis. p. 91.*

<sup>2</sup> *Porphy. Epist. ad Anebonem Ægyptium. 'Ὡς ἐπεδάλυσαι καὶ δι' ἐνθουσιασμῶ καὶ θεοροσίας πολλοὶ τῶ μέλλοντι, ἔγρησεότες μὲν ὡς ἐκέρσειν κατ' αἰθρῶν, αὐτοὶ δὲ πάλιν ἐν θεοκολυθύνῃ, ἢ ἔτι καὶ ὡς περὶ τερρὸν θεοκολυθύνῃς ἐαυτοῖς — οἱ δὲ ὕδωρ πίνοντες καθάπερ ὁ ἐν Κολοσσῶν ἱερεὺς τῷ Κλαυδίῳ οἱ δὲ γομίοις ἀγκυραβήκων, ὡς αἱ ἐν Διέσφοις θεοπίζουσαι οἱ δὲ τῶ ὕδατος ἀτμίζοντες, καθάπερ αἱ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι περὶ τῆς πόλεως.*

*Apollo*

*Apollo of Claros*, who enter'd into this state of Madness and Prophetick Enthusiasm by drinking the Water of a certain Fountain: The Priestesses of *Delphos*, by sitting upon the Mouth of the *Grotto*: The Prophetesses of the Oracle of the *Branchida*, by receiving the Vapours of a particular Water. On which *Iamblichus* answering him says, that all the rest of the Oracles were deliver'd no otherwise, than by this very way of Madness and Enthusiasm; and that if he has nam'd only these Three Oracles in particular, 'tis without doubt because they were more famous than the rest, and were sufficient to shew by what method the Gods communicated the Gift of Divination to Men. After which he explains, how these Vapours and Exhalations could contribute to cause this prophetick Madness, and to attract the Gods or *Demons* to those Persons that were full of them, supposing throughout, that this Madness is either the cause, or a necessary concomitant of Oracles.

It were superfluous to accumulate a greater number of Testimonies to prove, that Oracles properly so call'd were no otherwise deliver'd, than by Madness and Enthusiasm; and consequently by Men, who appear'd to be possess'd by this Madness; and not by such, as upon deliberation went secretly to place themselves in

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■ *Iamblichus*. L. De Myst. Sect. 3. cap. 11. Τειῶν δὲ τῆς ἀνὴρ διανοίας χρησιμεύοντες ἐκπνεύουσας, ἐκ οὗ μόνον ἐκταῖται, πολλὰ δὲ πλεονάζοντα τὰ φαντασμάτια, ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ προὔχουσιν ἡ ἄλλων ταῦτα, καὶ ἅμα δ' ἐνεκα ἐκείνων, ἡμεῖς ἀνὰ διδασκίαν περὶ τῶν τεύχων, οὐκ ἔστιν οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὁππότερου μὴ μαρτυρεῖται, διὰ τὰς δὲ ἀρχαίας τὰς τοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ καὶ τῶν τεύχων τῶν παλαιῶν Δόξων, καὶ περὶ τῶν πολλῶν μαρτυριῶν Λόγων ὑπογράφου.

an Image, and speak by the Mouth of it. There was never any but the Impostor *Alexander*, who undertook to have Oracles deliver'd in a manner almost like this by his Serpent *Glycon*, and to make them pass for such, as proceeded from the Mouth of *Æsculapius*. But this ridiculous Enterprize, as it was without precedent, so it had no followers. At least it is very certain, that all these famous Oracles of antiquity were no otherwise deliver'd, than in the manner I have explain'd. There is not one Author, whether Pagan or Christian, that gives any other *Idea* of this matter. They all speak only of Men inspir'd or possess'd, who deliver'd Oracles; and there is not one who on this Subject says any thing of Images animated or speaking.

This being beyond all doubt, I conclude first, That you was mistaken when you said, that as to the greatest part of Oracles this Madness was not necessary. Secondly, That Oracles properly so call'd being deliver'd only by Priests and Priestesses, who appear'd full of Madness and Enthusiasm, what you say here of subterraneous Passages, of Caverns, and Images where the Priests hid themselves, of their Trumpets, and of all their other Instruments, is all to no purpose, since you attribute all these Artifices and Cheats to them, only because you suppose, that it was the Images which deliver'd Oracles,

*Conclusions against Mr. de Fontenelle with respect to the Mistake, on which he has built one part of his System of the Cheats of Oracles.*

\* Lucianus in Pseudomante, Erasmo interprete. p. 485. Verum quò magis etiam redderet attonitam multitudinem, pollicitus est sese exhibiturum ipsum Deum loquentem, citraque interpretem edentem Oracula. Deinde non magno negotio gruum arteriis contextis, ac per lineum illud draconis caput, quod erat arte adsimulatum, insertis, alio quopiam per has foris insonante, respondebatur ad ea quæ proponebantur, voce nimirum per linteaceum illum Æsculapium ad aures promanante. Hujusmodi responsa *αὐτίφωνα* appellabatur, id est ipsius voce reddita.

or the Idolatrous Priests hid in the Images: Thirdly, That having in your Book no otherwise attack'd this kind of Oracle, which was the most common and at the same time the most famous, you have only fought with a *Chimera*, and left Oracles as you found them. Fourthly, That to have a just *Idea* of the most common way, in which Oracles were deliver'd, you need only imagine a Man or Woman really possess'd by the Devil: Since all that the Antients tell us of this Madness, with which all the Idolatrous Priests were transported, is perfectly like what we see, and what we read of those really possess'd. Fifthly, That the Fathers and the Primitive Christians, who always look'd upon them as really possess'd, had reason to conclude that Devils were the Authors of Oracles, since this Madness <sup>p</sup> which transports the Mind, which disturbs and puts it besides it self, can be nothing but the Effect of the Operation of the evil Spirit.

And now, Sir, if I were willing to divert

<sup>p</sup> Origines L. 7. contra Celsum. p. 333. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ εἰς ἑκασαὶν καὶ μαζικῶς ἄσσειν καὶ ἰδύσασιν ἢ δῆθεν περὶ ἡρώδου, ὡς μηδαμῶς αὐτῶν ἐαυτῇ ἀπολαύσασθαι, ἢ θεῶν πᾶν δαίμονα τῷ ἑρῶν ὄντι. Et infra. p. 334. Εἰδ' ἑξίσα, καὶ ἐκ ἐο ἐαυτῇ ὄντι ἢ Πυθίᾳ, ὅτε μανθάνει ποταπὸν νομίσσει πνεῦμα, τὸ (κότον καὶ χαλῆαν τῷ νῦ καὶ τῷ λογισμῷ, ἢ τοῦτον ὁποῖον ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ δαίμονων ἥθη, εἰς ἐκ ὀλίγοι Χριστιανῶν ἀπελαύνει τῷ παρόντων.

Chrysof. in Psal. xlv. p. 632. Ἐνθεῖν καὶ ἑτερόν τι μανθάνουσι, ὅτι οἱ περὶ ἡρώδου καὶ οἱ μάντις ἦσαν. ἐκεῖ μὲν γὰρ ὁ δαίμων, ὅταν εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν ἐμπέσῃ, πᾶσι καὶ διάνοιαν καὶ (κοίτῃ καὶ λογισμῷ, καὶ ἄλλως ἀπάντα ἐθέλῃ, εἰδὲν τῷ λογισμῷ ὁπότε αὐτῇ καὶ διανοίας αὐτῇ. Idem. Hom. 29. in c. xii. 1. ad Corinth. p. 430. Ἐν τοῖς εἰδώλοις ἐπὶ οἷα κατεχέθη τις ὑπὸ πᾶν δαίμονα ἀκαθάρτου καὶ ἐμάνθάνει, ὡς παρὰ τὸν δαίμονα ἄλλως ἐλκεῖται ὑπὸ τῷ πᾶν δαίμονα διδόντων, εἰδὲν εἰδώς ὡς λίγος. τὸ γὰρ μάντις ἰδίον τὸ θεσπεῖον. τὸ ἀνάγκη ὑπομένει, τὸ ὠθεῖται, τὸ ἑλκεῖται, τὸ ὑπὸ ὡς ὡς μανθάνει.

my self at another's Expence, and had any thing of that pleasantry and wit, with which you enliven all your Works, what might not I say, to give a little Life to the Subject I am upon, on occasion of all those Machines, you so liberally allow to the Idolatrous Priests in their acting these Comedies? Of those Caverns, and subterraneous Places, where you hide them so commodiously? Of those Perfumes you make them burn, when just going to enter their hollow Images, to persuade Men, that \* *it was the Arrival of the God which perfum'd all?* But what appears the most pleasantly fancy'd of all are the Trumpets you put into their Mouths, to raise their Voice, and magnify the Sound of it in a manner proper to create fear, of which you with so much probability suspect they might likely have found the Secret before Sir Samuel Morland who is reputed the Inventer of them: What a fair Field, I say, would all this afford any one, that were willing to give his Readers a little Diversion? But I easily omit all these Graces, which I might bestow on my *Answer*, to confine my self entirely to what is material. I choose rather to lose some Advantages, than to give you the least occasion of uneasiness, or depart from those sentiments of Esteem and Consideration, which I have and ever shall have for you. It is enough then for me to have shewn you, that all those artifices, which you afford the Idolatrous Priests for the delivery of their Oracles, fall to the ground; and that you do them much more honour than they deserve, in supposing them ingenious enough to have impos'd upon all the Earth for above Two thousand Years, by means of their hollow Images, and of their speaking Trumpets.

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\* Hist. Diss. I. c. 12. p. 160.

## CHAP. IX.

Necessary explanations on some particular Points advanced by the Author. He supposes without Proof, and contrary to what he says elsewhere, that the Heathens believ'd, that their Gods came to eat the Sacrifices offer'd to them.

Before I proceed to those Oracles which were deliver'd upon Letters seal'd up, give me leave to beg of you two or three Explications upon some things which you advance, with respect to this first sort of Oracles, of which we have been speaking. You say in relating the Story of the Priests of *Bel*, That \* *the Sub-*  
*ject* *where* *spoken* *of*, *is one of the Heathen Miracles,*  
*which was the most universally believ'd; namely,*  
*those Victims which the Gods came themselves to eat.* You'll oblige me very much if you'll intrust me more particularly in this matter, by shewing me from the Heathen Authors, that they believ'd as universally as you say, that the Gods came themselves to eat the Victims offer'd to them: I know the Poets give them *Nectar* and *Ambrosia* for their Food, and that some others thought the Smoke of the Sacrifices was very agreeable to them: But I don't know one who has said, that they came themselves to eat the Flesh of the Victims. I thought till now, that all the *Greeks* and *Romans* were fully perswaded of the contrary, and perfectly convinc'd that it was Men that fed themselves with the Sacrifice, after they had caus'd some part of it to be consumed by the Fire. You might have remember'd what *Virgil* <sup>†</sup> and *Porphyr* <sup>‡</sup> say on this

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\* Hist. ibid. p. 157.

† Virg. L. viii. *Æneid*. l. 179.

Tum lecti juvenes certant, araq; Sacerdos  
Viscera tota ferunt taurorum, onerantq; canistris  
Dona laboratæ Cæreris, Bacchumq; ministrant.

‡ Vescitur *Æneas* simul & *Trojana* juvenus  
Perpetui tergo Bovis, & lustralibus extis.

§ Porphyr. apud *Ensebiu*. L. 4. Præp. Evang. cap. 9.  
p. 147. Explicans ritus sacrificiorum *Apollinis* Oraculo præscriptorum, ait: Τὸς Οὐρανίους ὁ ἅγ' Ἀπόλλωνος τὰ ἀνα-  
?

Subject: You might have read what your Author mentions out of *Ovid* † to prove the same thing. But above all, you should have considered what you say your self a little after upon the Testimony of *Pausanias* †, That they who came to consult the Oracle of *Trophonius* \* *lived wholly upon the Flesh of the Sacrifices*. Here I must desire you to agree with your self, and with the Author you profess to follow.

You say, secondly, with regard to the same Oracles, That † *what they call'd the Mysteries and secret Ceremonies of a God, was one of the best Artifices which the Priests had invented for their own security, because these Mysteries engag'd those who were initiated in them to so inviolable a* *He believes that the Silence, to which they were engag'd who were initiated in the Heathen Mysteries, did also relate to Oracles.*

† ἱερῶν ἀδικῶν ὅσων ἀφαιρῶν, τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ μὲν ἐδίδου, ἐν μύθῳ δὲ τῶν ἐρωτῶν (δι. Oraculi carmen quod explicat illud est. p. 146.

\* Ἀρετὴ μὲν ἱερῶν δίδουσι, τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ ποσειδῶν.

Idem. L. 2. De Abstinentia ab usu animalium, interprete Bernardo Feliciano. §. 8. De Basilis, inquit, qui antiquitus Taurorum sacrificia fuerant imitati, verum etiam ex hominum mactatorum carnibus in cibum sumebant, non secus ac nos in cæteris animalibus nunc facimus, dum reliquas Sacrificiorum carnes in epulas referimus.

† *Ovid*. L. 12. *Metamorph.* l. 150.

Festa dies aderat, quæ Cycni victor Achilles  
Pallada mactatæ placabat sanguine vaccæ.  
Cujus ut imposuit profecta calentibus aris;  
Et Diis acceptus penetravit in æthera nidor;  
Sacra tulere suam, pars est data cæteta mensis.  
Discubere thoris proceres & corpora tosta  
Carne replent, vinoq; levant curasq; sitimq;

\* *Pausanias*. L. 9. p. 602. Ἐπειδὴν ἀνδρὲς ἐς τὸ Τροφονίῳ ἀλίσταται δόξῃ, πρῶτα μὲν τελευτήσαντων ἐμμερῶν ἐν οἰκίῃ καθεύδει· τὸ δὲ οἶκημα Δαίμωνος τε ἀσπάζεσθαι καὶ Τύχης ἱερὸν ἔστιν ἀσπάζεσθαι. Διασπάζοντες τε ἐνλαύθουσι, τότε ἅλλα καθαρεύουσι, καὶ λουτρῶν ἕρξουσι. τὸ δὲ λουτρὸν δὲ ποσειδῶνος ἔστιν ἢ Ἐρμῆος καὶ οἱ πρὸς ἀφρονά ἔστιν ὑπὸ τῷ Θυσίῳ.

\* *Hist.* Diss. 1. ch. 15. p. 185.

† *Hist.* Diss. 1. ch. 13. p. 163, 164.

silence. I am of opinion, that the silence to which the Mysteries engag'd them, only regarded the Mysteries themselves, and not the Oracles, which were very different. The idolatrous Priests were not more solicitous, that the Mysteries should be conceal'd, than that the Oracles should be publish'd, and that Men should every where divulge them, as a thing most proper to create a high Opinion of the Power of their Gods. *Pausanias* " assures us, that they who had consulted the Oracle of *Trophonius*, were oblig'd to expose in publick upon Tables all that they had seen and heard. His Book, and those of other Heathen Authors are full of Oracles deliver'd, and of Descriptions of all that was usually done, when Men went to consult them. But neither he nor they say any thing of what pass'd in their Mysteries. They always take care to let us know, as *Herodotus* " does, that they cannot speak of them, without rendring themselves guilty of impiety. And we should never have known any thing of what those infamous Mysteries contain'd, if the Christians, as *Firmicus*, *Arnobius*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and some others, had not acquainted us with them, whether it were that they knew them of

" Idem. ibid. p. 604. Τὰς δ' ἐς τὸ Τροφῶνιον κατελθόντας, ἀνάσκησας ὅποσα ἤκουσεν ἕκαστος, ἢ εἶδεν, ἀναθεῖναι γεγραμμένα ἐν πίνακι.

" Herodotus. L. ii. cap. 50. p. 71. Ἐν δ' βυστίαι πόλι' ὡς ἀνάμνοι τῇ "Ισοι τὸ ἐρίῳ εἶρη περτερόν μοι τυπτοῖ, καὶ δὴ μὴ τὸ δυσίῳ πάντες καὶ παῖσαι, μυριάδες κάρηα πολλὰ καὶ ἀνθρώπων πῶς δ' τυπτοῖ, καὶ μοι ὅσιόν ἐστι λέξω. Et sub finem ejusdem libri. cap. 69. p. 99. Περὶ μὲν νυν τῶν εἰδότες μοι ἐπὶ πλέον ὡς ἕκαστα αὐτέων ἔχουσιν, ὡς ὅμοια κείδω καὶ τὸ Διμήνησσι τῆς πόλεως, καὶ οἱ Ἕλληνες θεομορφία καλέουσι, καὶ ταύτης μοι πᾶσι ὡς ὅμοια κείδω, πολλὰ ὅσον αὐτῆς ὅστις ἐστὶ λέξω.

themselves \*, while they were yet Heathens, or that they had been inform'd of what was done there by Heathens, who had been converted †. In a word, it was permitted to all the World to consult Oracles; whereas the favour of being initiated in their Mysteries was only vouchsaf'd to some chosen Persons, and that after a great deal of ceremony ‡ and probation.

The third thing I have to say to you, re-<sup>With regard to</sup> spects the Oracle of *Apollo of Daphne*, which the<sup>the Relicks of</sup> Relicks of the Martyr *Babylus* put to silence, as<sup>the Martyr Ba-</sup> the Pagans themselves acknowledge, and among<sup>bylas, he chooses</sup> others the Sophist *Libanius* \*. You find how<sup>rather to adopt</sup> ever that there is much more likelihood, <sup>the frivolous</sup> conjectures of that the cause of this silence was only \* the<sup>Mr. Van-Dale,</sup> great concourse of Christians assembled at this<sup>th. n to follow</sup> the Opinion of Martyr's Tomb, which disturb'd the Priests of all the Ecclesi-<sup>the Ecclesi-</sup> Apollo, who did not care to have for witnesses<sup>astick Histori-</sup> of their Actions, enemies so clear sighted as the<sup>ans, and espe-</sup> Christians. It seems, Sir, you have here forgot<sup>cially of St.</sup> John Chryso-  
stome.

\* Tatian had been initiated in the Pagan Mysteries before he embrac'd Christianity, as himself witnesses in the Book he compos'd against the Heathens. Orat. ad Græc. p. 174.

† Autor Quæst. Vet. Test. apud August. Quæst. 114. p. 591. Prædicatâ enim fide considerantes qui audiebant quid boni & sanctitatis publicè promitteretur, contulerunt se ad fidem occulta illa inhonesta & turpia relinquentes, & quomodo per ignorantiam illusi sint, confitentes.

‡ Vide Clementem Alexandr. L. v. Strom. Theonem Alexand. de Mathem. Platonis, & Eliam Cretens. p. 407. in Orat. 3. Gregorii Nazianz. p. 77. ubi de Mithræ Mysteriis agens, ait ex Suidâ: Τὸν Μίθραν νομίζουσι Πέρσαι ἃ ἥλιον ἦν, καὶ τότε δύσειν πολλὰς θυσίας, καὶ θύειν τινὰς εἰς αὐτὸν τῆς αἰῆς. ἑδὲς ὃ δυνάμει τῆς αἰῆς, τὰς δὲ Μίθρας τῆς αἰῆς, εἰ μὴ διὰ πασῶν κολάσεων παρέλθοι, καὶ δείξει ἑαυτὸν ἀπαθὴν τινὰ καὶ ὁσιον. Λέγονται δὲ ὁσδοήκοντα ἢ κολάσεις, αἱ καὶ βαθμὶν δέκα τῆς θεοπροσίτου παρέχουσιν.

• Libanius apud Chrysostom. L. de S. Babyla & contra Gentiles.

† Hist. ibid. p. 171.

your Caverns and subterraneous Passages, where the Idolatrous Priests and all their Machines were so well secur'd against the too great curiosity of their own party themselves. Was there any danger of the Christians going to make their Remarks upon them, even into these frightful Sanctuaries, where it was not lawful for any one to enter? Were the Relicks of the Martyr *Babylas* within the Temple of *Apollo*, or was it necessary for those, who went to honour them in the Place where they were, to enter that Temple? But if there was any danger of the Christians entring thereinto thro' curiosity, who hindred the Idolatrous Priests from shutting the Doors of the Temple, after they had let in those whom they thought proper to be admitted? If too much light incommoded them, why did they not make their Images speak in the Night? But above all, why did they not upon these occasions make use of their speaking Trumpets, threatning the most dreadful Punishments to all such prophane Persons, as should dare to approach? Such a frightful Business had been capable of putting all the Christians to flight, and filling the whole City of *Antioch* with terrour. I am really troubled, Sir, to see that you have chose rather upon this occasion, to adopt the ridiculous Fancies of Mr. *Van-Dale*, than to follow the Opinion of *Socrates*<sup>b</sup>, *Ruffinus*<sup>c</sup>, *Theodoret*<sup>d</sup>, *Sozo-*

<sup>b</sup> *Socrates*. L. iii. Hist. cap. 18. Τα γὰρ καὶ τὰ Ἀγρίοχαιαν ἱερὰ καὶ Ἑλλήνων ἀνοικνύσαι κηρύσσει, χρησμὸν λαβεῖν οὕτως καὶ ἐν Δάφνῃ Ἀπόλλωνος ἱεροῦ διεναι. αἷς δὲ ὁ ἐνοικῶν τῶν ἱερῶν δαίμων καὶ γέγονα δεδαικώς. λέγω δὲ Βαβυλῶν καὶ μαρτυροῦν, ἐκ ἀπεκλεισθῆναι πλεονήσων γὰρ ἢ καὶ Κορὸς ἢ τὸ Καμα καὶ μαρτυροῦν κρύπτειν. γνῆς καὶ αἰτίαν ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ Κορὸν τὰ καὶ κηρύσσει μετοικίζεσθαι, &c.

<sup>c</sup> *Ruffinus*. Hist. Eccles. L. x. cap. 35.

<sup>d</sup> *Theodoret*. Hist. L. iii. cap. 10.

men<sup>e</sup>, Nicephorus<sup>f</sup>, and above all of St. John Chrysostome<sup>g</sup>, who with his usual force and eloquence shews, that there was no other cause of the silence of this *Dæmon*, and of the burning of his Temple afterwards, than the Power of St. *Babylas*, taking for witness of the Truth of all those things he asserts, them that had both heard him, and seen most of the Wonders which had happen'd on this occasion. It is a little peevish in down right terms to contradict so many great Men, and Eye-witnesses; and to desire to make them pass either for blind Men, or for Impostors.

After this short digression let us return to our CHAP. X. Oracles, and see how you get clear of those, *How Mr. de* which were deliver'd upon Letters seal'd up. *Fontenelle explains those* You easily overcome this difficulty\*. *The Priests, Oracles, that* you say, *know the secret of opening these Letters were deliver'd* and sealing them up again, without any one's per-*upon Letters* ceiving it †. *But if the Priests, you add, did seal'd up. His* not dare to hazard the unsealing them, they endeavour'd cunningly to find out, who it was that *explication con-* brought the Persons to the Oracle. This still supposes, that only those Priests were Masters of address and cunning, and that all they who had to do with them, were Fools who did not so much as suspect, that their Letters might be

\* Sozomen. Hist. L. v. cap. 19.

† Nicephorus. L. x. cap. 28.

‡ Chrysost. L. de S. Babyla & contra Gentiles. p. 459.

Δια τὸ τοι ταῦτο τὸ μυστήριον ἐστὶ περὶ τῶν γεγραμμένων ἵνα μή τις μετὰ τὰ παλαιὰ διηγήσεων ἐν ἐκείνοις μὴ πολλὰς ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἐκείνης νομίζῃ· τὸ δὲ ταῦτα δρασαντων ἐστὶ καὶ γέγραπτες καὶ οἱ περὶ τῶν, ὅς ἐστιν ἀνάγκη, ὅτι παρὰ ἐμὲ περὶ τῶν, περὶ τῶν καὶ διηγήσεων.

§ Hist. Diss. I. ch. 14. p. 173, 174.

† Hist. ibid. p. 176.

opened, or see that in their discourse themselves had discover'd the Secret, which they desir'd to conceal. For you may please to observe, that they who consulted Oracles by seal'd Letters, were mistrustful Persons, who took this way only to avoid being impos'd upon, and to try even to impose upon the Oracle, if they could. So you may well think, that with this precaution they did not neglect any other, which might be taken to prevent being surpriz'd.

*The example of Trajan who used this method in consulting the Oracle of Heliopolis, and was thereby convinc'd, that there was no human deceit in it.*

It was in this disposition the Emperor Trajan<sup>b</sup> consulted the God of *Heliopolis*. His Friends exhorted him to address himself to this Deity, to learn the success of his Expedition against the *Parthians*; and to engage him to it they recited to him the wonderful Predictions which that God had utter'd. The Emperor, who gave not much Credit to them, and fear'd there might be Delusion in the matter, sent the God a Letter seal'd up, and desir'd an answer to it. All the Answer the Oracle gave was, to command a blank Paper well folded and seal'd up, should be sent back to him. The Priests were frighted at this command, because (says *Macrobius*, who relates this Story) they did not know what the Emperor's Letter was. But *Trajan* having receiv'd it,

<sup>b</sup> *Macrobius* L. i. *Saturn.* c. 23. p. 262—3. Sic & Imperator Trajanus imiturus ex eâ provinciâ Parthiam cum exercitu, constantissimæ religionis hortantibus amicis qui maxima hujusce numinis ceperant experientia, ut de eventu consuleret rei cœptæ; egit Romano consilio prius explorando fidem religionis, nè fortè fraus subesset humana. Et primùm misit signatos codicillos, ad quos sibi rescribi veller. Deus jussit afferri chartam, eamq; assignari puram & mitti: Stupentibus sacerdotibus ad ejusmodi factum: ignorabant quippe conditionem codicillorum. Hos cum maximâ admiratione Trajanus excepit, quòd ipse quoq; puris tabellis cum Deo egisset.

was in admiration of it, seeing an Answer so like the Letter he had sent, and in which only himself knew, that there was nothing at all written. Being thus convinc'd that there was no Cheat in this Oracle, he consulted it upon his Expedition, and had such an Answer from it, as he might have from the Devil; that is to say, an obscure and ambiguous one, capable of being accommodated to many quite different Events. Indeed the Devil that presided over this Oracle, might well know whether Trajan had writ any thing in the Letter or no; but he could not know whether that Emperor should return with Success from his Expedition, because he cannot certainly foresee what is to come, which depends upon contingent Causes.

Such was also that Governour of Cilicia<sup>1</sup>, whom Plutarch mentions. He was a Man hard of belief, addicted to the Opinions of the Epicureans, in whose Company he was perpetually. He sends one of his Servants to the Oracle of the Epicureans.

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch. L. de Defectu Orac. p. 771. Ἐχω δ' εἰπεῖν τὸ Μόψα ὡραζομένην περὶ δαυμασιώτατον· ὃ γὰρ ἡγεμὼν τῆς Κιλικίας αὐτὸς μὲν ἀμφίδοξός ἐστι πρὸς τὰ θεῖα, δι' ἀδένειαν ἀπιστίας ὀμαι· τ' ἄλλα γὰρ ἦν ὑβρείς καὶ φαῦλος, ἔχων ὃ περὶ αὐτὸν Ἐπικυρεῖς τινὰς καὶ καλῶ δὴ καὶ φυσιολόγον ἐνυβρίζοντα, ὡς αὐτοὶ λέγουσι, τοῖς τοιούτοις εἰσέπειμ' ἀπ' ἀπείρου οἷον εἰς πολεμίων καλῶ σκοπον ἐνσκάδοντας, ἔχοντα καὶ σφοδρῶς ὠρῶν δέλτον, ἐν ᾧ τὰ ἐρωτήματα ἦν ἐγχεσθαι, ἵδενός ἐστιν· ἐνυχδίσας ἐν ὁ ἀνθρωπῶ (ὡς γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐστὶ) τῷ Σηκῶ καὶ καλακοιμήθεις ἀπήγειλε μὴ ἡμέραν ἐνύπνιον τοιούτων ἀνθρωπῶν ἐδοξεν αὐτῷ καλὸν ἐπὶ σάντα φθίγγασθαι τοσούτον, μέλανα, καὶ πλέον ἐθελῶν, ἀλλ' ἀθὺς οἷχεαδ' ἔσθ'· ἡμῖν μὲν ἄστογον ἐφάνη, καὶ πολλὰ ἀπείαν παρέχεν· ὃ δ' ἡμεῖς ἐκείνο ἔπειλῃ καὶ προσεκώμῃσεν, καὶ τὸ δέλτον ἀνοίξας ἐπεδείκνυν ἐρώτημα τοιούτων γεσθαι, Ποτέρῃ τοι Λακὼν ἢ μέλανα δύσω τῶν; ὥς καὶ τῷ Ἐπικυρεῖ διαλεχθῆναι, καὶ αὐτὸν αὐτὸν τῷ τε δύσας ἐπιγῆν, καὶ ἰδέσθαι διὰ τέλος τὸ Μόψον.

*Mopsu* with a Letter seal'd up, to which he desires an Answer might be given in a Dream. His Servant tells him what he had seen in his Sleep, and what had been said to him; and the Governour is very much astonish'd at the perfect agreement of this Answer, with what he had writ in his Letter, which was brought him back seal'd as he had sent it. The *Epicureans* are yet more surpriz'd at it than he, and have nothing to reply. Why did they not say with you, that the Governour's Letter had been open'd, and afterwards cunningly seal'd up again? They might that way have easily solv'd the difficulty, Could *Plutarch* who relates this instance, and *Macrobius* that of *Trajan*, neither of them suspect the same thing? But both of them had without doubt less artifice and cunning than your Author: They had not the leisure to invent an explication so happy and so far fetch'd, as that with which this learned Man has furnish'd you.

The Oracle of  
Claros consult-  
ed by Germani-  
cus, and the  
injudicious re-  
flections of the  
Author, upon  
what Tacitus  
has related  
concerning it.

You afterward sexplain the Oracle of *Claros*\*, of which *Tacitus*† speaks in his second Book of *Annals*. “*Germanicus*, says this Author, “went to consult the Oracle of *Claros*. It is “not a Woman that delivers Oracles there as “at *Delphos*, but a Man whom they choose out “of certain Families, and who is almost al- “ways of *Miletum*. It is enough to tell him “the Number and the Names of those that

\* Hist. ibid. p. 180.

† Corn. Tacitus L. ii. *Annal.* p. 63. Relegit Asiam adpel- litq; Colophona, ut Clarii Apollinis Oraculo uteretur. Non femina illic, ut apud Delphos, sed certis è familiis & ferme Mileto accitus sacerdos, numerum modò consultantium & nomina audit: tum in specum degressus, hausta fontis arcani aqua, ignarus plerumq; literarum & carminum, edit responsa versibus compositis, super rebus quas quis mense concepit.

“ come

" come to consult him. And then he with-  
 " draws into a Grotto, and having taken some  
 " Water from a Fountain hidden there, he an-  
 " swers in Verse to what you have conceiv'd in  
 " your mind. Tho' for the most part he is ve-  
 " ry ignorant. Your Reflections on this Ora-  
 " cle are \*, *First*, That the Person who gave the  
 " Answers was a *Man*, and not a *Woman*. *Second-*  
 " *ly*, That this Man's *Ignorance could never be well*  
 " *prov'd*. *Thirdly*, That it was necessary for him  
 " to know the *Names of those who consulted him*.  
 " *Fourthly*, That what he did for Germanicus, he could  
 " not have done for a private Citizen of Rome.  
 After this, must not the whole World agree  
 that there was nothing but Imposture in this  
 Oracle? Do not the proofs which you produce  
 for it evidently demonstrate that? I know not  
 what they think of them, who have read your  
 Book. I fear they do not think them altoge-  
 ther conclusive. For my part I must confess,  
 I am not contented with them, and that I  
 had rather you had made some Reflections up-  
 on what the same Author adds, that this false  
 Prophet answer'd the thoughts of those who  
 consulted him. It seems to me indeed, that  
 the Devil himself cannot do this, since the  
 secrets of the Heart, as well as the certain  
 knowledge of things to come, are reserv'd to  
 God alone. It is true however, as St. *Augu-*  
*stin* teaches, that the Devil has a great faci-  
 lity

\* Hist. ibid. p. 181, 182.

† August. L. de Divin. Dæmonium. p. 600. Aliquando &  
 hominum dispositiones, non solum voce prolatas, verum eti-  
 am cogitatione conceptas, cum signa quædam ex animo ex-  
 primuntur in corpore, totâ facilitate perdiscunt: atq; hinc  
 etiam multa futura prænuntiant, aliis videlicet mira, qui ista  
 disposita non noverunt. Sicut enim apparet concitator ani-  
 mi motus in vultu, ut ab hominibus quoq; aliquid forinsecus  
 agnoscat,



such like. You say then, \* *That the Caverns where these Oracles were deliver'd might be full of Perfumes and Odours which disturb'd the Brain; that the Waters, which they oblig'd those to drink who went down to these places, might also be prepar'd for the same purpose. † That they never fail'd to fill the Minds of such Persons with Ideas proper to create Dreams, in which Gods and Things extraordinary should bear a part. Lastly, That they usually made them sleep on the Skins of sacrific'd Beasts, which might have been rubb'd with some Drug, that should work an extraordinary effect upon the Brain.*

First, You give us all these pleasant Con-  
 jectures without any Proof or Authority, upon  
 imaginary Possibilities; there being nothing in  
 all the Authors who have writ of these kinds of  
 Oracles, which could give you occasion to be-  
 lieve or suspect, that all these Artifices were  
 made use of. Secondly, In my Opinion all  
 these Perfumes, Odours, and Drugs, were more  
 likely to cause Pains in the Head, and restless  
 Nights for want of Sleep, than to procure  
 Dreams. Thirdly, Tho' they might have caus'd  
 Dreams, yet they could not produce such, as  
 should have relation to the Subjects upon which  
 particularly the Oracle was consulted.

*The Explication  
 which he gives  
 of them con-  
 futed.*

Bœotia, Mopsi in Cilicia, Hermionæ in Macedonia, Pasi-  
 phaz in Laconia — Nam de Oraculis etiam cæteris, apud  
 quæ nemo dormitat, quid aliud pronuntiabimus, quàm Dz-  
 monicam esse rationem eorum spirituum, qui jam tunc in  
 ipsis hominibus habitaverint, vel memorias eorum affectave-  
 rint ad omnem malitiæ suæ scenam, in istâ æquè specie di-  
 vinitatem mentientes, eademq; industriâ etiam per beneficia  
 fallentes medicinarum, & admonitionum, & prænu-  
 ciationum, quæ magis lædant juvando, dum ea per quæ juvant,  
 ab inquisitione veræ divinitatis abducunt ex insinuatione  
 falsæ.

\* Hist. Diss. i. ch. 15. p. 191.

† Hist. ibid. p. 192.

*The Idolatrous Priests by all their Artifices were not able to procure such Dreams, as those Persons usually had, who went to Sleep in the Temples, where these kinds of Oracles were deliver'd.*

How for instance could these Artifices concur, to give the Governour of *Cilicia's* Servant of whom we have spoken, that Dream in which he thought there appear'd to him a well shap'd Man, and said this one word, *black*, in answer to a Letter he had brought seal'd up, wherein the Governour, to try the Oracle, had writ this Question, \* *Shall I sacrifice a white Oxe to you, or a black?* How do you imagine all these Perfumes and Drugs could make the sick Persons, who came to Sleep in the Temples of *Æsculapius* and *Serapis*, behold those Medicines in their Dreams which they were to use for their Cure? Of a hundred such that Sleep or Dream, is there any who have naturally such Dreams, or to whom one could promise to procure such by all the Drugs imaginable? Yet we must either absolutely reject the Testimony of those Authors who speak of these Oracles, or own that in truth they who went to Sleep in the Temples of *Æsculapius* and *Serapis*, had commonly Dreams relating to their Distempers, and which prescrib'd them Remedies, good or bad, of which they were to make use. Does not *Strabo* ° relate, " That *Serapis* " was religiously honour'd in *Egypt*, and that " he cur'd the Sick to that degree, that the most " considerable Persons of the Country were

\* Hist. Diff. I. c. 14. p. 175.

° *Strabo*. L. 17. Geogr. ubi de *Canopo*. *Xylandro* interprete. p. 801. *Canopus* 120. Stadiis distat ab *Alexandriâ* terrestri itinere, cognominis *Canopi*, qui *Menelai* Gubernator fuerat, & ibi mortuus est. Habet *Serapidis* Templum religiosè cultum, ut etiam nobilissimi viri ei credant, & pro se vel aliis insomnia ibi capere. Sunt qui curationes conscribant: Quidam virtutes ibi editorum Oraculorum. Vide eundem. L. 8. p. 374. De *Æsculapii* templo, quod erat *Epidauri*: Et *Iamblichum* de eodem *Æsculapio* agentem. L. de *Myst.* Sect. 3. cap. 3.

" per-

“persuaded of it, and went to Sleep in his  
 “Temple, in order to learn Remedies for their  
 “own Distempers, or for those of their  
 “Friends; and that there were Authors, who  
 “had committed to writing the wonderful Cures,  
 “which were wrought there after this man-  
 “ner? Does not *Tertullian* own, That *Æscu-* Many sick  
 “*lapius* had by the same Method restor’d Health Persons were  
 “to three Persons, whom he names? And does cur’d by means  
 not the Greek inscription <sup>of these</sup> you mention, <sup>Dreams.</sup>  
 which is found in *Gruter*, say of the same *Æ-*  
*sculapius*, “That the Oracle order’d a blind  
 “Man call’d *Caius* to come near the Altar and  
 “kneel down, then to pass from the Right  
 “Side to the Left: to put his Hand upon the  
 “Altar, and after that upon his Eyes; and  
 “that he thereupon recover’d his Sight in the  
 “Presence of the People, who testify’d their  
 “Joy \* that so great Wonders were wrought in  
 “the Reign of *Antonine*, their Emperor?  
 “That the same Oracle bid one *Lucius*, who

\* *Tertull.* in Apolog. cap. 23. p. 22. *Ista ipsa Virgo cœ-*  
*lestis pluviarum pollicitatrix, iste ipse Æsculapius medicina-*  
*rum demonstrator, aliâ die morituris Socordio & Thanasio*  
*& Asclepiodoto vitæ sumministrator, nisi se Demones con-*  
*fessi fuerint, &c.*

\* *Gruter.* Inscript. p. 71. Αὐταῖς ἡ ἡμέραις Γαλῶ τινὲς  
 τυφλῶ ἐχενημάτισεν ἐλθεῖν ἐπ’ ἱερὸν Βῆμα καὶ προσκυνη-  
 σαι. ὅτα ἀπὸ τῆς δεξιᾶς ἐλθεῖν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτισσόν, καὶ δεῖναι τοῦ  
 πάλιν δακτύλου ἐπάγειν τὴν βῆμα, καὶ δεῖναι τὴν χεῖρα καὶ  
 ἐπιθεῖναι ἐπὶ τοῦ ἰδίου ὀφθαλμοῦ, καὶ ὁρθὸν ἀνέλκειν, καὶ  
 δῆμι παρῆσθαι, καὶ συγχαίρειν ὅτι ζῶσαι ἀρεῖαι  
 ἡμίονο ἐπὶ τῆς δεξιᾶς ἡμέρᾳ Ἀπριλίῳ.

Διὰ τὴν πάλαιαν καὶ ἀρχαίαν τὴν παλαιὰν ἀνθρώπου  
 ἐχενημάτισεν ὁ θεὸς ἐλθεῖν, καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς δεξιᾶς αὐτοῦ τέρεται,  
 καὶ μετ’ οὖν ἀναφύγειν καὶ ἐπιθεῖναι ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον, καὶ  
 ὁρθὸν καὶ δημοσίᾳ νύχαισιν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ὁ δῆμι  
 συγχαίρειν αὐτῷ.

\* The Author seems to conjecture that the Reading should be  
 πῶσαι, and I have follow’d him in that conjecture, tho’ I chose to  
 retain the old Reading in the Inscription, as he himself does af-  
 ter *Gruter*.

“ was

“ was seiz’d with a Pleurisy, and given over  
 “ by the Physicians, to come near and take  
 “ some Ashes from the Altar, mix them with  
 “ Wine, and apply them to his Side: That  
 “ upon this he recover’d, and gave publick  
 “ Thanks to the God for his Cure, and the  
 “ People congratulated with him thereupon?

*They ought to  
 be ascrib’d only  
 to the Devil,  
 who can indeed  
 cause Dreams,  
 and cure some  
 Diseases, par-  
 ticularly those  
 of which him-  
 self has been  
 the Author.*

Now whatever expence you be at in Drugs and Perfumes, I’ll undertake you will never account for such Dreams as these by your System; whereas nothing is so easy, if we follow the Opinion of the Fathers; for it is certain the Devil can cause Dreams. ’Tis the Doctrine of all the Divines; who after *Tertullian*\*, distinguish three sorts of Dreams: Some which come from God, others from the Devil, and most of them from Natural Causes. It is also certain, that the Devil can cure some Diseases, and particularly those of which himself has been the Cause. “ They destroy Mens Health, says “ *St. Cyprian*†; they cause Diseases to do themselves Honour; that rectifying what they

\* D. Th. 2. 2. q. 95. Art. 6.

† *Tertull. L. de Animâ c. 47. p. 299.* Definimus enim à Dæmoni plurimum incuti somnia, & si interdum vera & gratiosa, sed, de quâ industriâ diximus, affectantia atq; captantia: quanto magis vana & frustratoria & turbida; ludibriosa & immunda. Nec mirum, si eorum sunt imagines, quorum & res. A Deo autem pollicito scilicet & gratiam spiritus Sancti in omnem carnem, & sicut prophetatos, ita & somniatos servos suos, & ancillas suas, ea deputabuntur, quæ ipsi gratiæ comparabuntur, si qua honesta, sancta, prophetica, revelatoria, ædificatoria, vocatoria — Tertia species erunt somnia, quæ sibi met ipsa anima videtur inducere ex intentione circumstantiarum.

‡ *Cyprian. L. de Idolorum vanitate: p. 14.* Valetudinem frangunt, morbos laceffunt ut ad cultum sui cogant, ut odore altarium & rogis pecorum saginati, remissis quæ constrinxerant curâsse videantur. Hæc est de illis medela, cum ipso morbo cessat injuria.

" have put out of order in the human Body,  
 " they may appear to have restor'd Health:  
 " They Cure, by putting an end to the Ills  
 " which themselves have caus'd. *Tertullian*  
 " " says the same thing. No doubt they are  
 " bountiful with respect to the Cure of Distem-  
 " pers; for they themselves are the Authors of  
 " them, and then they prescribe Remedies for  
 " them, admirable for their Novelty, often  
 " contrary and pernicious: After which they  
 " desist from causing the Ill, and thereby Men  
 " think that they have cur'd it. As they are  
 " subtil Spirits, says *Lactantius* " , they insin-  
 " ate themselves into Mens Bodies, and piercing  
 " as far as their Entrails, they impair the  
 " Health, cause Diseases, occasion frightful  
 " Dreams, disturb the Mind by that madness  
 " they inspire, to force Men thereby to have  
 " recourse to them. They who are Strangers  
 " to the Truth know not the cause of all these  
 " Illusions: They think these evil Spirits cure  
 " when they cease to hurt, Spirits that are not  
 " capable of doing any thing but Ill.

You come next to the ambiguity of Oracles, CHAP. XI  
 and say, \* *This is one of those things which best*

" *Tertull. in Apol. c. 22. p. 22. Benefici planè & circa* what the Au-  
*curas valetudinum: lædunt enim primò, dehinc remedia* thor pretends.  
*præcipiunt, ad miraculum nova, sive contraria, post quæ* The Devils not  
*desinunt lædere & curâsse creduntur.* knowing cer-

" *Lactant. L. 2. Divin. Instit. c. 14, & 15. p. 105. Qui* to come, were  
*quoniam sunt spiritus tenues & incomprehensibiles, insinuant* often oblig'd to  
*se corporibus hominum, & occultè in visceribus operi vale-* utter obscure  
*tudinem vitiant, morbos citant, somniis animos terrent,* and ambiguous  
*mentes furoribus quatunt, ut homines his malis cogant ad* Oracles, on pur-  
*eorum auxilia decurrere. Quarum omnium fallaciarum ratio* pose to conceal  
*expertibus veritatis obscura est: prodesse enim eos putant,* their Ignorance,  
*cùm nocere desinunt, qui nihil aliud possunt quàm nocere.*

\* *Hist. Diss. c. 16. p. 195.*

*shew, that Men had to do in them.* I know not whether you thought this a good proof to maintain your System: But it will be no hard matter to shew, that it proves nothing. Indeed to make it good and conclusive against the common Opinion, it were necessary that the Devils should have been always able, and always oblig'd to speak clearly in the Oracles they deliver'd. Then after having shewn, that they did not do so, you would have reason to conclude, that we were in the wrong to ascribe Oracles to them: And that it is much more credible, that only Men-deceivers were concern'd in them. But you have not prov'd, that the Devils always could and must have express'd themselves clearly and without ambiguity in their Predictions. It were necessary for that, that they should have a certain knowledge of things to come, and particularly of such, as depend upon free or contingent Causes. Indeed you seem to suppose this in your Argument: But it is a Mistake, of which I have already taken the liberty to admonish you. The Devils therefore being thus ignorant of what is to come, in order to conceal their ignorance, were oblig'd to involve their Oracles in affected obscurities and ambiguities, by means of which they might be accommodated to several quite different, and sometimes even contrary Events. Thereby, as the Fathers \* have observ'd, they made

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\* Tertull. in Apol. c. 22. p. 22. In Oraculis autem quo ingenio ambiguitates temperent in eventus, sciunt Cræsi, sciunt Pyrrhi.

Hieronym. in c. 41. Isaiz. p. 158. Ubi Apollo Delphicus & Loxias, Deliusq; & Clarius & cætera Idola futurorum scientiam pollicentia, quæ Reges potentissimos deceperunt? Quod si aliquis dixerit multa ab Idolis esse prædicta: hoc sciendum

made iport with the Credulity of the Heathen; they miserably seduc'd them; and whatever might happen, since they always appear'd to have foretold the Truth, they preserv'd among them the Worship and Divine Honours, of which they had possess'd themselves.

Yet all their Oracles were not ambiguous. *Yet they deliver'd some that were clear enough, particularly when they foretold in one place what they had seen in another,* Some of them were clear enough, and especially those, by which they foretold in one Country what they had seen in another. The facility they have in conveying themselves almost in an instant into different Places, was the occasion that they often gave such Oracles, as prov'd exactly true; and thereby strangely surpriz'd the Heathens. Such were those for example, by which they foretold in *Egypt* the time when the

endum, quòd semper mendacium junxerint veritati: & sic sententias temperârint, ut seu boni seu mali quid accidisset, utrumq; possit intelligi: Ut est illud Pyrrhi Regis Epirotarum Aio te, Æacida, Romanos vincere posse.

Et Cræsi: Cræsus transgressus Halym maxima regna perdet: Lactant. L. 2. c. 14. p. 105. Dæmonas autem Grammatici dictos aiunt quasi δαίμονας, id est peritos ac rerum scios. Hos autem putant Deos esse: sciunt illi quidem futura multa, sed non omnia: quippe quibus penitus consilium Dei scire non licet. Et ideo solent responsa in ambiguos exitus temperare. August. L. iii. de Civit. c. 17. sub finem, &c.

Autor Quæstionum ad Antiochum apud Athanasium. Quæst. 99. p. 370. Quid igitur, nunquid præscius est futurorum Diabolus, & Dæmones futura prædicere queunt? Responsio. Præscius rerum, & eordium cognitor solus est Deus: Nec enim vel Angeli cordis abscondita vel futura videre possunt. Dæmones verò ea, quæ præmonstrare creduntur, versutè indagantes prædicunt. Ut pote sæpenumerò tanquam spiritus, videntes imbres, qui adhuc sunt apud Indos, prævertunt & anticipant in Ægypto, & per incantationes & somnia magnam Nili inundationem prædicunt.

Athanas. in vitâ S. Antonii. p. 470. Τὸ γὰρ δαίμασιν εἰ λεπτοτέροις χρώμασι σώμασι μᾶλλον ἢ ἀνθρώπων, καὶ πρὸ ἀρετῶν οὐδὲν ἐωρεχόντες περιλαμβάνουσι τὰ δεινὰ

the Nile would overflow the Country, after having seen in *Ethiopia* the abundant Rains, which had fallen there. Such also was that which they deliver'd to *Crasus* 2, when that King had a mind to make tryal of the Divinity of *Apollo* of *Delphos*. You know that this *Demon* conjectur'd very well for that time, and that he precisely told the Ambassadors of that Prince what their Master was doing at *Sardis*, at the very Moment they were consulting him. According to the Opinion of the Fathers, these kinds of Oracles are easily explain'd, and the Explication they give of them, which is that I have just now hinted, does admirably confirm the truth of their Opinion. But I should be very glad to know, how you can explain them according to your System. Pray tell me by what artifice the Priests of *Delphos* were able to know, that at the very Moment the Ambassadors of *Cra-*

It does not appear how Mr. de Fontenelle can explain these kinds of Oracles in his System concerning the Impostures of Idolatrous Priests.

δραγμα ἢ ἀπαγγέλλουσι — & p. 471. ὅτι καὶ περὶ τῶν ποταμῶν ὁ δαίμων ὅτιν ὅτι φανερῶς ἐνεκατέτις καὶ πολλὰς ὕβρις ἡμετέρας ἐν τοῖς τῶν Αἰθιοπίας μερῶν, καὶ εἰδότες αἱ καὶ ἀντίστοιχον ἢ πλημμελὲς τῶν ποταμῶν γίγνεται, πρὶν εἰδέναι αἱ τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν τὸ ὕδατος, περὶ τῶν ποταμῶν λέγουσι. τὸτο δ' ὅτι καὶ ἀνθρώποι ἀνέκασι, εἰ τοσούτων ἐδωκίμω δακρυῶν ὅσον αἰνῶται — ὅτι συνίστηται τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων μαθήματα, καὶ ὅτι ἐπικρατέως οἱ περὶ τῶν δαμνῶν τὸ πρῶτον.

2 Herodotus. l. i. Hist. cap. 8. p. 111.

Ὅθεν δ' ἐστὶν ἡμῶν δαίμων καὶ μόνος δαίμων,

καὶ κατὰ συνήθειαν καὶ ἐκ φυσικῆς αἰτίας.

Ὁ δὲ μετὰ φρίκην ἦλθε κρατερῇ οἷα χεῖρτι

Ἐλπίδα ἐν χερσὶ καὶ αἱ ἀνείκελαι κρείων,

Ἡ χερσὶ καὶ ἡ κρατερὴ, χερσὶ δ' ἐπίστα.

3 Tortell. in Apolog. cap. 22. p. 22. Omnis spiritus alis:

Hoc & Angelus & Demones. Igitur momento ubiq; sunt, totus orbis illis locus unus est; quid ubi geratur tam facile sciunt quædā conuincunt. Velocitas divinitas creditur, quia substantia ignoratur — Cæterum testudinem decoqui cum carnibus pecudis Pythius eo modo renuntiavit, quo supra diximus. Momento apud Lydiam fuerat.

fin

*ſus* were conſulting the Oracle, that Prince was at *Sardis* ordering a Tortoiſe to be boil'd with a Lamb. Tho' I reflect upon all the ways of cheating, with which you furniſh them, and conſider all the Inſtruments and Machines, with which you fill their Caverns, yet I find nothing there, but Sir *Samuel Morland's* Trumpets; that can be of any uſe to you here. Since you ſuppoſe the Idolatrous Priests had Spies in all the Provinces; to give them intelligence of all that happen'd; there is nothing wanting after this; but to give each of them one of the longeſt of theſe Trumpets, by means of which they of *Lydia* might in a Moment make themſelves heard from *Sardis* to *Delphos*.

But to be ſerious, I don't think you would be able to explain theſe kinds of Oracles, tho' you ſhould ſuppoſe the Idolatrous Priests a thouſand times more cheats; and more cunning than you make them. Give me leave then to propoſe them to you, to Answer what you require of *Eusebius*, when you ſay, that \* *he ſhould have brought ſome Oracle which was not ſuſpected; but was deliver'd with ſuch Circumſtances, that it could never be imputed to the artifice of the Priests, tho' a great many of the others might.* In my Opinion it is hard to impute this I ſpeak of to that Cauſe, and I believe the only ſhift you have left is, to deny that this Oracle was ever deliver'd, notwithstanding the Authority of *Herodotus*; who gives the Story of it at large, and of a great number of other Authors as well Chriſtian as Heathen, who have mention'd it as one of the moſt famous and celebrated Oracles of antiquity.

*They are propoſ'd to him, to answer what he requires of Eusebius.*

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\* Hist. Diss. i. c. 9. p. 118.

CHAP. XIII I must now speak a Word or two to what you say \*, *That the cheats of Oracles were manifestly discover'd, and expos'd to the Eyes of all the World, when the Christian Religion triumph'd over the Heathen under the Christian Emperours.* You produce an instance or two of it, to which I Answer,

*There was imposture in some Oracles, but it was very soon discover'd, because it is not possible, that lying and deceit should subsist long.* First, That I don't doubt but that among the numerous Oracles of all sorts, which have been in the Heathen Religion, there were many false, and such as were only the effect of some Imposture. In all Ages there have been Impostors, who sought to procure themselves Reputation, to amass Riches, or to maintain their Opinions by counterfeiting Miracles and Wonders. There have been such even among the Christians, and I could here produce many of them, without being oblig'd to return very far into antiquity ; but these cheats were very soon found out : Because it is not possible, that Imposture should support it self long. It very seldom outlives its first Inventers. The false Prophet *Alexander* <sup>b</sup>, whose Life *Lucian* has writ, did not long impose upon the Credulity of the People. His Cheats were immediately discover'd. Even in his Life time the Christians and Heathens found them out, and expos'd them. They fell with

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\* Hist. Diff. I. c. 17. p. 203.

<sup>b</sup> Lucianus in Pseudomante, Erasmo Interprete: p. 484. Verum ubi jam plerique quibus mentis plusculum inerat, non secus atque ex alta ebrietate resipiscences, conspirassent in illum, præsertim ex iis, qui studebant Epicuro, jamque paulatim in oppidis deprehenderetur universa præstigiatura, fictusque fabulæ apparatus: horrendum quiddam in eos edidit, dicens impiis & Christianis impleri Pontum, qui non verentur in sese turpissime maledicere, eos jussit lapidibus pellere, si modo vellent propitium habere Deum.

the Impostor, and even before him, and we should never have heard of them, if *Lucian* had not thought fit to preserve the Memory of them in one of his Books.

The Imposture of *Theotecnus* <sup>c</sup> lasted no longer than that of *Alexander*. It was discover'd very soon, and the Author tho' otherwise a very considerable Person, was together with his Accomplices, put to Death for it by the Emperor *Licinius*: So that we may observe by *The Heathens themselves* the way, that the Heathens themselves had an *were careful to prevent it, and punish'd the Authors of* abhorrence of these kinds of Impostures, that they were careful to prevent them, and that they did not suffer them to escape unpunish'd.

Such is the Fate of Cheats be they never so well concerted, some way they presently give themselves the Lie, and are immediately found out. Men being naturally Incredulous and hard of Belief (as others <sup>d</sup> have observ'd before me) all

<sup>c</sup> Eusebius Hist. Ecclef. L. ix. c. 11. Ἐκάλει δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ Θεότεκνον ἢ Δίκη, ἐδαμῶς τὰ κατὰ τὴν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ πεπραγμένα λήθη ᾤχεσθαι δόξα, ἐπὶ αὐτῷ κατ' Ἀντιόχειαν ἰδρυθέντι παρ' αὐτοῦ δοξαζομένη, ἥδη καὶ ἡγεμονίας ἡξίωτο ᾤχεσθαι Μαξιμίαν. Δικίννῳ δ' ὀπώρας καὶ Ἀντιόχειαν πόλεως, φωσφίνε γοήτων ποιοσάμενθ' αὐτὸν καὶ νεοπαῖς δοξαζομένην καὶ ἱερῆς Βασάνου ἡκίετο· τίμη λίσσ' αὐτὴν καθυπεκείνοισι πωθανομένῳ; ὥς δ' ὀπκρύπτει αὐτοῖς πρὸς τὴν βασάνων (ὡς γαυνομένων αὐτῶν) τὸν ἦν, ἐδήλων δὲ τὸ πᾶν μυήειον ἀπάτην τυγχάνειν τέχνη τῇ Θεότεκνον μεμηχανημένῳ. Τοῖς πᾶσι δ' αἰτίαν ὀπθαίς δίκην, πρῶτον αὐτὸν Θεότεκνον, ἔτα δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὴν γοήτειαν κοινωνίαν, καὶ πλείους ὅσας αἰτίας θανάτου ᾤχεσθαι δίδωσι.

<sup>d</sup> Gregor. Nyss. in vitā S. Macrinæ sub finem. p. 204. Οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τὰ εὐαγγέλιον μέτρα τὸ πιστὸν ἐν τοῖς λεγόμενοις κείνους, τὸ δὲ ὑπερβαῖνον καὶ ἀκρόνθ' ἀδύνατον, ὥς ἔω τὴν ἀληθείαν καὶ τὴν ἀλόγιστον ὑπόνοιαν ὑβρίζουσι.

all that is beyond what they can see or do themselves, whatever is wonderful and extraordinary, appears to them suspicious: They always surmise there may be Fraud and Imposture therein; and if there be never so little of it, 'tis not possible it should escape them, unless it be the effect of some superior Power, that much surpasses them in Subtilty and Malice. Nay it happens but too often, through this Reluctance they have to believe what appears extraordinary, that they fancy there is Deceit where they have not the least reason to suspect it. But if the Truth, and that often a Truth perfectly Divine, meets with such difficulty in making it self own'd, how could a Cheat meerly human long maintain it self? How could it subsist so many Ages together, and deceive (I don't say a few ignorant Persons, but) the most Learned Men, and whole Nations of the greatest Understanding and Capacity?

Such were those famous Oracles of which we speak: They subsisted above two thousand Years; and during all this time were consulted, admired, and reverenc'd by all the Heathen, by the most knowing People and Nations. The *Oracles would never have subsisted so long as they did, if there had been nothing but cheat in them.* Grecians and Romans regarded them, as what was most August and Divine in their Religion. The Philosophers as well as others, were convinced, that they contain'd something superna-

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Reflexions Morales D. L. R. Refl. 291. Nous ne croyons pas aisément ce qui est au delà de ce que nous voyons.

Theodorit. in initio vitæ S. Simeonis Stylitz in Hist. Religiosa. c. 26. p. 877. φιλοῦσι ὅ οἱ ἄνθρωποι τῇ φύσει μετρεῖν τὰ λεγόμενα· εἰ δὲ τι τῆ ταύτης ὄρων ἐπέκεινα λήσῃσιν, ἰδὼν τοῖς τῷ θεῷ ἀμύητοις ὁ λόγος νομίζεται.

tural

tural and extraordinary; they enquir'd into the Causes of them; they form'd Systems to explain them: The most part ascrib'd them immediately to the Power of their Gods; some to inferior Spirits; others to the natural Dispositions of certain Persons, and to the vertue of peculiar Places of the Earth. There is scarce so much as one to be found among the most incredulous, among those that own neither Deity, nor Providence, nor the Immortality of the Soul, who thinks fit to believe that all these Oracles were only Cheats of Idolatrous Priests; Cheats so very gross, that in the way you explain them after Mr. *Van-Dale*, they would not be capable of deceiving the most stupid and ignorant of the Country People even for six Weeks together; and yet according to you they did for many Ages impose upon whole Cities and Provinces, upon the most Learned Princes and Philosophers, and the most intelligent People and Nations; so that none was ever able to discover them. Is it because they were incapable of suspecting that Men could, or that they would deceive them? If the Idolatrous Priests had any Interest in amusing and seducing them, had not these much more in preventing it? They were spoke to from hollow Images; their Ears fill'd with the noise of speaking Trumpets; they were laid asleep with I know not what Drugs; Puppets were made to act before their Eyes; and yet for more than two thousand Years they believ'd all this was Divine, Supernatural, Miraculous; in one word, the Work of the Gods, and the effect of a Power Divine. And the small number of those, who more incredulous than the rest, could not persuade themselves that the Gods were Authors of these

Oracles were oblig'd, as *Aristotle* \* and *Pliny* the elder †, for the Explication of them, to have recourse to chimerical Vertues and Properties of Nature, or of certain Exhalations of the Earth. Not one among them opens his Eyes, to find that they are abus'd, and that they make themselves ridiculous by a serious Enquiry into the Cause, when the Effect is nothing but a *Chimera*, or the gross Delusion of some Impostors. One ought surely to have a very large Faith, to believe that so many great Men, so many and different People and Nations were blind to this prodigious degree for such a long succession of Ages. It is easier to give credit to what is most wonderful and incredible in the Stories of the Poets: Yet you believe this Wonder, as much an Enemy as you are to any thing that may be accounted miraculous, and you have much less difficulty in doing this, than in believing that in Oracles there have been illusions and tricks of the Devil. Thus it happens, that from an unwillingness to admit of one Opinion, which is very reasonable, very well prov'd, and very conformable to what the true Faith and the Scripture teach us, Men often engage to believe and maintain the strangest Paradoxes, and the most chimerical and impossible Systems. From whence does this proceed, but that many Men don't care to hear Devils spoke

Often, from an unwillingness to believe things very reasonable, Men engage in the belief of such, as are most unreasonable and impossible.

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\* *Aristot.* L. de Mundo & in Problem. Sect. 30. locis supra descriptis p. 91.

† *Plinius* L. 2. Natur. Histor. c. 93. Fatidici specus quorum exhalatione temulenti futura præcunt, ut Delphis nobilissimo Oraculo. Quibus in rebus quod possit aliud causæ asserre mortalium quispiam, quàm diffusæ per omne Naturæ subinde aliter atq; aliter numen erumpens.

of, nor any think which has relation to them? This awakens certain *Idea's* of another Life, which do not please them: They sufficiently believe the Truths of Religion upon reasonings of Speculation, but cannot bear too sensible Arguments of those very Truths.

In the second place it may be consider'd, that the Cheats of which *Eusebius* <sup>a</sup> and *Theodoret* <sup>b</sup> make mention, were not discovered till long time after the Establishment of the Christian Religion. It is no hard matter to give the reason of it. Most Oracles being then ceas'd, because the Devils had been cast out of them by the Power of Christ, and the Faith of the Christians, some Heathens (to uphold their Religion now sinking, when no longer propt up by those pretended Wonders of Oracles, which were its ablest support) endeavour'd to repair this defect, by supplying their place with artifices and cheats. It was a great trouble to them, that they did no longer see among them, as formerly, Persons inspir'd, prophetick Dreams, apparitions of their Gods, and Prodigies and Miracles to authorize their Idolatry. They did therefore on this occasion, what was very natural for them to do, and what has been done since more than once in a matter almost of the same Nature. They counterfeited Oracles the best they could, now: They could have no more true ones: But as such cheats cannot subsist

CHAP. XIV.  
The cheats of  
some Oracles  
were not discovered, till long  
after the Establishment of  
Christianity.  
The Reason of  
this.

<sup>a</sup> Eusebius L. iv. Præp. Evang. c. 2. sub finem p. 135. Ubi cum præcipue de Oraculo Theotecnii agere manifestum erit, si conferatur is locus cum altero petito ex ejus Historia L. ix. c. 3, & 11.

<sup>b</sup> Theodoret. Hist. Eccles. L. v. c. 22.

long, they were presently found out, and punish'd as they deserv'd.

*Because there were some counterfeits Oracles, we can't thence conclude, that all the rest were so too.*

*Thirdly.* What can you conclude from the Cheats of Theotecnus<sup>1</sup>, and of some others such like, if there be any to be found? That all the other antient Oracles were likewise nothing but Impostures? This is no good consequence. Cheats have been discover'd in these last Ages, who have counterfeited Persons possess'd: Can you from thence conclude, that all those possess'd with Devils, of which there is mention in sacred History, and in the most authentick Lives of the Saints, were likewise nothing but Cheats and Impostors? There have been false Miracles, and the Fraud of them has been discovered. Therefore all the Miracles which have been wrought in all Ages were likewise fraudulent and false. Is this consequence good? On the contrary in my Opinion this other is far more just and reasonable. There have been false Miracles, therefore there are a great many true, because the false suppose the true; as false Money supposes there is some, which is good and lawful. Men do not counterfeit Falshood, but Falshood counterfeits Truth. Therefore the

*On the contrary the false Oracles suppose there were some true.*

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<sup>1</sup> I was willing with the Author of the History of Oracles to consider that of Theotecnus as a meer Cheat, tho' if I would examine the matter more nearly I might be able to prove, that there was Magick in it, and the Illusion of the Devil. Eusebius gives a clear Testimony of this. His Words are these: Τη δὲ αὐτῶν τι διὸς οὐλὴν μαγικαίας τισὶ καὶ γυναικῶν ἰδρύσθης τας τε ἀνδρῶν αὐτῶν καὶ μυσταῖς ἀνθυμῶντος, καὶ γινῶν τε καθαρῶς ἐπιστάτας, καὶ καὶ βασιλῆας καὶ τοῦτο, οἱ αὖ ἐδιδὼν χρηστέον ἐκείνῃ ἐπεδείκνυστο· καὶ δὴ οὐ πολὺν χρόνον τῇ κατ' ἡρώδου καὶ καὶ αὐτῶν, ἐπιστάτας καὶ χερσιν αὐτῶν καὶ δαίμονα· καὶ τὸ δὲ δὴ καὶ αὐτῶν οὐκ ἔστιν, ἰσχυρῶς καὶ πόλεως καὶ τῇ ἀμφὶ τὸ πόλεως ἀσπῶν, οἱ αὖ ἐχθρῶν αὐτῶν χερσιν ἀπῆλθον. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. L. 9. cap. 3.

Falshood

Falseness of some Oracles, the Cheats of some Impostors, who have endeavour'd to counterfeit Oracles, suppose there were some true, that is some which were not the Effect of the Imposture of Heathen Priests. I have therefore right to conclude from the false Oracle of *Theotecnus*, from that of the Impostor *Alexander*, and if there be any other of that kind to be found, that those of *Delfos*, of *Dodona*, and of *Clarus* were true Oracles, in the sense I have just given of this Word.

*Fourthly.* You must give me leave to tell *A Passage of* you, that you have taken the Words of *Eusebius* taken *Eusebius*, concerning the Oracle of *Æsculapius* of *in a contrary* the City of *Ægis* in *Cilicia*; in a quite contrary *sense by the Au-* sense. You say \*, *Eusebius relates, that they story.* cast out of this Oracle, neither a God nor a Devil, but the Cheat who had for so long time impos'd upon the Credulity of the People. You understand by that Cheat, some Impostor among the Idolatrous Priests; but in reality the Cheat, of whom *Eusebius* speaks in this place, is no other than *Æsculapius* himself; that is the Devil, who under the name of this false Deity seduc'd the People by his Oracles. That which deceiv'd you was the Word *Δαίμων*, (*Dæmon*) which *Eusebius* takes in this place, in that sense in which the Heathens use it, that is for a Spirit or inferior Deity. You would easily have perceiv'd your mistake, if you had taken the pains to read *Eusebius*. What he proposes to signify thereby is so clearly express'd in what he says at the beginning, and at the end of this Story, that it is not possible to doubt one moment of

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\* Hist. Dissert. l. ch. 17. p. 204.

his meaning. The Passage <sup>k</sup> in question is this.  
 "The Emperour commanded the Temple also  
 "to be ras'd. Immediately this Temple, so  
 "famous and so much admir'd by the greatest  
 "Philosophers, was thrown down by a com-  
 "pany of Soldiers, and with it that which was  
 "hid in it, which was neither a God nor a *De-*  
 "*mon*, but a Seducer of Souls, who for a long  
 "succession of Ages had deceiv'd Men. Thus  
 "he that promis'd to cure others of their Di-  
 "stempers, could find no remedy for his own  
 "Destruction, nor preserve himself then, any  
 "more than when he was struck with thunder,  
 "as the Poets tell us.

It is evident that *Eusebius* here understands the Devil, who under the Name of *Æsculapius* had so long time misled the Heathen. The Name he gives him of Seducer of Souls, and that long succession of Ages, during which he says he had deceiv'd them, do not agree with a Man. In fine he puts the matter beyond all doubt, when he adds that it is the very same,

<sup>k</sup> Euseb. L. 3. De Vita Constantini. cap. 56. Ἐπειδὴ ὁ πολὺς ὡς ὁ τῆς δοκίμης Κοφῶν περὶ τῆς Κιλικίαν δαίμονα πλάνθῃ, μυεῖαν ἐπισημῶν ἐπ' αὐτῷ, ὡς ἐν ἐπὶ τῷ αἵματι καὶ ἰατρῷ, ποιεῖ μὲν ἐπιφανομένη τοῖς ἐκκενθόμενοι, ποιεῖ δὲ τὰ σώματα καυρόντων ἰωρῶν τὰς νόσους. Ψυχῶν δ' ἢ ὁλεῖται ἀνθρώπων, ἢ μὲν ἀληθῶς ἀφελκων Σάπηςθ, ἐπὶ δὲ τὸ ἄθρον πλάνθῃ καὶ σαπῶν τοῦ πρὸς ἀπάτῃ ἐνχερεῖς· εἰκότα δὲ Βασιλεὺς περὶ τῶν, θεὸν ζηλωτῶ ἀληθῶς τῶν πρὸς περὶ ἐκκενθόμενοι, καὶ τῶν εἰς ἐδάφθ· τὸ νεὼν ἐκκενθόμενοι καὶ ἐκκενθόμενοι· ἐνὶ τῇ νύμῃ καὶ γῆς ἡπλῶτο, δεξιᾷ κατὰ τὴν ἐκκενθόμενοι ἐκκενθόμενοι τὸ τῶν ἡλικίων φιλοσόφων βοδόμενοι δαίμα, καὶ ὁ τῇδε ἐκκενθόμενοι, ἐ δαίμων, ἐ δὲ θεὸς, πλάνθῃ ὅτις ψυχῶν, μακροῖς καὶ μυεῖοις ἡπατήσας χερόνις· εἴθ' ὁ κακῶν ἐτέρως ἀπαμείβεσθαι καὶ συμφορὰς περὶ ἐκκενθόμενοι, ἐδὲν αὐτὸς αὐτῷ πρὸς ἀμύμων δὲ τοῦ φάρμακον μᾶλλον, ἢ ὅτε κεραυνῷ Βληθῶναι μὴ θάδε).

who

who promis'd the Cure of Diseases, and of whom the Poets say, that he dy'd by a stroke of Thunder. What he says at the beginning of this Story does no less clearly determine his meaning, but it would be too long to transcribe it here, nor does the Matter deserve it.

I shall finish this second Part of my Answer, *The conclusion of this second Part of the Answer.* by drawing a conclusion from what I have said, in favour of the Opinion of the Primitive Christians, and of the Fathers of the Church concerning Oracles.

What was seen extraordinary and marvellous *The Heathen Oracles can be attributed only to Devils.* in the Heathen Oracles must be attributed either to the Power of God, or to some natural Cause (as for instance, The heat of the Imagination, or the vertue of some Exhalation) or Lastly, To the Malice and the Imposture of Devils. We cannot ascribe it to God, because all Oracles were full of Impiety, Cruelty, Falshood, Idolatry, and all sorts of Infamies and Abominations: We cannot impute it to any natural Cause, since there were many things in Oracles that surpass'd the Power of all these Causes, as the foretelling of divers Events, the Cure of several Diseases. Neither can we attribute it to the Imposture of the Idolatrous Priests, as I have made appear. We must therefore ascribe it to the Malice and Imposture of Devils, which was the Opinion of all the Christians in the first Ages, and is still of most of them to this Day.

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A N  
 A N S W E R  
 TO THE  
*History of Oracles,*  
 Address'd to the  
 A U T H O R.  
 The Third P A R T.

In which is shewn, that the Heathen Oracles did cease after the coming of Christ, thro' the Power of his Cross and the Invocation of his Name; and an Answer given to those Reasons, which the Author of the History has alledg'd to the contrary.

CHAP. I.  
*General Reasons which should have diverted the Author from undertaking to*

**I** Am very apt, Sir, to think you must have felt some Reluctance, while you were writing your second Dissertation; to prove, that Oracles did not cease at the coming of our Saviour: You saw your self again oblig'd  
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singly to oppose the Opinion of the Fathers, <sup>overthrow the</sup> and even of the profane Authors, who have <sup>Opinion of the</sup> own'd this Truth so glorious to our Religion: <sup>Fathers con-</sup> And this would naturally create trouble to a <sup>cerning the</sup> wise Man, that respects the Authority of these <sup>time when</sup> great Men, and knows how dangerous it is to <sup>Oracles cease'd</sup> set himself against their unanimous Opinion. Besides it is impossible you should not have observ'd, that your Opinion takes off from the Glory of our Saviour, who to this Day has been own'd as the destroyer of Idolatry, and by consequence of Oracles; which as they had the greatest share in that false Worship, so they contributed most to its support. Yet you seem willing to insinuate, that our Saviour had no part in this great Event. You speak of nothing but the Edicts of the Christian Emperors, when the extinction of Idolatry is in question; and you ascribe the Cessation of Oracles, partly to these Edicts, and partly to the contempt which the *Romans* and some Sects of Philosophers had of Oracles, and to the Crimes and the Impositions of the Idolatrous Priests. From whence it follows, that the greatest Miracle of the Christian Religion, which is the Establishment of it upon the Ruins of the Heathen, was wrought in a Method intirely Human and Natural, and that nothing is to be found in it, which ought to be attributed to the Power of Christ. It must needs be shocking to a Christian, to find himself under an Obligation to diminish the Glory of Jesus Christ, whom he owns as his God; and against his Inclination to conceal, that it is to Him he is indebted for the happiness of his Deliverance from the Darkness of Heathenism, and the Tyranny of the Devil.

You

*He should by no means have rely'd in this matter upon the Authority of Mr. Van-Dale.*

You will tell me perhaps, that you thought your self oblig'd to sacrifice all Repugnances of this nature to the Truth, which ought to prevail above all other Considerations. The Pretence is plausible, but I think you should first have well assur'd your self of this Truth, by consulting the Works of the Fathers, and carefully examining the Sense of their words, without taking it on trust upon the Authority of Mr. *Van-Dale*, which you ought for more Reasons than one to have suspected in matters of this Nature. If this had been done, a Person of your Capacity and Learning would have easily found, that the Opinion of the Fathers concerning the time when Oracles ceas'd, is clear, certain, indubitable, and perfectly conformable to the Truth. But you did not think fit to take this pains. You wholly rely'd upon the Credit of this *Anabaptist* Physician in the case, and upon his Authority you believ'd the Fathers had asserted, That at the very Moment of the Birth of Christ all Oracles ceas'd without exception, in all parts of the World. After which it was not difficult for you, still following your Guide, to shew that this Opinion is false, since it's manifest there were Oracles still consulted after the Birth of our Saviour.

*He ascribes an Opinion to the Fathers, which was never theirs.*

But I think, Sir, I can shew you evidently, that the Fathers, (and in particular *Eusebius*, whom you attack here personally,) did never say nor think what you make them say; and that it is a false and chimerical Notion, with which Mr. *Van-Dale* has furnish'd them, that he might thence have an occasion to confute them, and if possible to overthrow their Authority.

*What was their true Opinion.*

What then, you will say, is their true Opinion? 'Tis that the Heathen Oracles ceas'd after the Birth of our Saviour, and the preaching of  
of

of his Gospel, not all at once, but proportionably as he was known of Men, and as his saving Doctrine was every where receiv'd. They give the time of his Birth for that, in which Oracles began to fall to decay, by the flight of those Devils that were the Authors of them: but not for the precise Moment, in which they were entirely ruin'd in all parts of the World. They teach that this miraculous Event ought to be attributed to Christ, to his Power over Devils, and to that which he gave Christians, to cast them out in his Name. Among other Proofs of all this, let me give you these following.

I begin with *Eusebius*, who in his fifth Book CHAP. II.  
*de Preparatione Evangelicâ*, in the very Title of *Eusebius* did  
 the first Chapter \* speaks thus. "It is further not say, that  
 "prov'd, that the Heathen Oracles are the the Heathen  
 "Work of the evil *Demons*, and 'tis shew'd in Oracles ceas'd  
 "what manner these Oracles ceas'd, after the at the moment  
 "Publication of the Gospel of our Saviour. of Christ's  
 "You see, Sir, he does not say, they ceas'd at the Birth: but only  
 "moment of Christ's Birth, but only after the after the Pub-  
 "Publication of his Gospel, which is very lication of his  
 "different. He says in the beginning of this Gospel.  
 "first Chapter, "That tho' what he had said hi-  
 "therto clearly shews, that the Gods of the  
 "Gentiles are neither Gods, nor so much as  
 "good *Demons*, he will yet bring new proofs  
 "of it, that we may the better know the Ad-  
 "vantage, which the Doctrine of the Gospel  
 "of our Saviour has brought Mankind, by de-

\* Euseb. L. 5. Prep. Evang. cap. 1. p. 178. Ἐπεὶ οὖν  
 ἡ πορνεία δαιμόνων ἐστὶ τὰ πρὸς τοῖς ἔθνεσι, μαλίστα καὶ  
 χερσὶν αὐτῶν καὶ ὡς καθήκει πάντα καὶ ἐκλείπει μὲν τὴν  
 σοφίαν ἡμῶν ἐναγύγιον διδασκαλίαν.

“livering them from the Slavery they were in. After which he immediately adds these words,”  
 “Hear then how the Heathen Authors themselves acknowledg, that their Oracles ceas’d only at the time, when the saving Doctrine of the Gospel began to spread over the Earth, and to enlighten Men with its bright Beames; and we shall shew presently, that it was only after the Birth of Christ, that Men began to speak of the Death of *Demons*, and that the Oracles ceas’d, which were so famous heretofore. It was not therefore till after our Saviour’s Birth, and the Publication of his Gospel, that *Eusebius* says Oracles ceas’d. Afterwards to prove what he had affirm’d concerning this cessation of Oracles, he produces the Testimony of *Porphyry*, who in the Book he wrote against the Christian Religion, says thus, “Is it a wonder if Diseases have reign’d in the City so long, since *Æsculapim* and the other Gods have withdrawn themselves from among Men? For since Men began to worship Christ, no body has been sensible of any publick Benefaction from the Gods. You see *Porphyry* speaks of the Oracles of *Æs-*

*He proves his Opinion by the Testimony of Porphyry.*

• Euseb. ibid. “Ἄκουε τοῖς ἄρτι αὐτῶν ἐλλείπων ὁμοί οἰν-  
 των ἐκλιθοιτένας αὐτῶν τὰ χρησθένεια, ἐδ’ ἀλλοτρίε ποσὲ δὲ  
 αἰῶνθ. ἢ καὶ πρὸ χρόνων τ’ Ἀσκληπιοῦ καὶ ἐναργητικῆς δι-  
 δασκαλίας τ’ ἐνδὲ θεῶν καὶ Ἀσκληπιοῦ χρεῖς πλεονασθῆσαι ἐν  
 γῇ, φάσις δὲ καὶ πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἀναστροφῆς· αὐτίκα  
 γὰρ μάλα ὅσον εἰπέω πῶς ἀσκήσουμεν, ὡς ἀρὰ μὲν τ’ ἐπιφά-  
 νηται αὐτῶν, καὶ θάνατοι τ’ δαιμόνων ἰσορήθησιν, καὶ τὰ θαν-  
 οῦσα καὶ βοῶντα χρησθένεια διδύχοι παύσιν.”

• Porphyrius apud Euseb. ibid. p. 181. Νυνὶ δὲ θαν-  
 οῦσιν, εἰ τοσούτων ἐστὶ κατὰ τὴν φύσιν τ’ νόσον, ἢ  
 Ἀσκληπιῶν μὲν ἐπιδημίας καὶ τ’ ἄλλων θεῶν μὴκέτ’ ἔσθαι.  
 Ἰσοῦ δὲ τιμωρῶν, ἐδεμίας τις θεῶν δημοσίας ὥρῃας  
 ἔσθαι.

*culapim,*

*culapim*, in which this Deity, or rather this Devil heal'd the Sick in a Dream, appearing to them and prescribing them Medicines, of which they should make use. Therefore by *Porphyrus*'s own concession these kinds of Oracles had thro' the Power of Christ then ceas'd, as well as most of the rest: And that is the Proof which *Eusebius* brings, to shew that, after the Gospel was publish'd, Oracles had been reduc'd to silence, even by the acknowledgment of the Heathens themselves.

To prove afterwards what he had said, that it was not till that time neither, that the Heathens vended Stories of the Death of their *Demons*, to explain the Cause of this silence which was so surprizing, he produces the Oracle of *Apollo* which you have mention'd, and then the Authority of *Plutarch*, and his Story of the Death of the great *Pan*; after which he concludes thus: "By that then you may know the time, when the Empire of Devils abolish'd, as well as the Custom of sacrificing Men; which did not happen till after the Publication of the Gospel. You see the time that *Eusebius* assigns to these two Events (which you may observe he joyns together) is not precisely the moment of our Saviour's Birth, but the time in which the Gospel was publish'd to Mankind. He had said immediately before, "That the Death of this *Demon* (that is according to *Eusebius* the beginning of the "Downfall of the Devil's Empire) happen'd

<sup>d</sup> Eusebius. *ibid.* c. 17. p. 208. Ἐχεις ἐν ᾧ τὸ δαίμονων καθαιρέσεως καὶ χρόνον, ἐκ ἄλλοτε ἢ αἰώνος ἰσορροπίας, ὡς ἐν ᾧ τὸ ἀνθρωποθυσίας τὸ ἐθνῶν καὶ ἀλλοτε, ἢ μὲν τὸ πρῶτον εἰς πᾶσας ἀνθρώπων κήρυγμα τὸ εὐαγγελικῆς διδασκαλίας γεγενυμένον.

“ in the Reign of *Tiberius*, in the time that our  
 “ Saviour cast out Devils, as is related in the  
 “ Gospel. And indeed was it not at this time,  
 as *Eusebius* observes, that the Son of God began  
 to overthrow the Empire of the Devil, to cast  
 out this *Prince of the World*, as he calls him, to  
 bind this *strong-arm'd* Person, and to destroy all  
 his Works, which was the End for which he  
 came upon the Earth, as the Scripture <sup>1</sup> in-  
 forms us.

*A new Proof of  
 the Opinion of  
 Eusebius taken  
 from his Books  
 de Demonstra-  
 tione Evange-  
 licâ.*

This antient Author speaks in the same man-  
 ner, concerning the time when Oracles ceas'd,  
 in his fifth Book *de Demonstratione Evangelicâ*:  
 Where having recapitulated the Proofs he had  
 brought in his Books *de Preparatione Evangelicâ*,  
 to shew that Devils were the Authors of Ora-  
 cles, he proceeds thus <sup>1</sup>: “ Lastly 'tis an evi-  
 “ dent sign of their weakness, that now they  
 “ give no more Answers, as formerly, which  
 “ has only happen'd since the Birth of our  
 “ Lord Jesus Christ: For since his Doctrine has  
 “ been spread abroad, Oracles are ceas'd. You  
 see *Eusebius* does not say, that Oracles ceas'd  
 precisely at the moment of Christ's Birth, but  
 after his Birth, and since his Doctrine was  
 spread abroad in the World. You might also  
 have observ'd, that by those Words (*which did  
 not happen till after the Publication of the Gospel*)

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii. 8. For this purpose the Son of God was mani-  
 fested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. l. 5. Demonstr. Evang. paulo post initium.  
 p. 204. Καὶ τέλει πάντων ἐλεγχθῆναι τὰς ἀλογίας αὐτῶν  
 φύσεως ἥν, τὸ βεβλῶαι καὶ μὴκέθ' ὁμοίως χρᾶν· καὶ σβε-  
 βλῶαι μὴ ἀλλήλῃ, ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν χρόνων τῆς ὁμοθυμίας τῆς Σωτῆ-  
 ρικῆς ἡμεῶν Ἰησοῦ τῆς Χριστοῦ. ἥτις ὡς εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη δόξα  
 δεξαμένη ὁ τῆς εὐαγγελικῆς διδασκαλίας αὐτῶν λόγος, ὃς  
 ἐκείνη καὶ τὰ χρησμεῖα διέλιπεν, καὶ δαιμόνων δυνάμεις  
 μνημονεύον.

which

which he uses in the last Passage that I have cited out of his Book *de Preparatione Evangelicâ*, he compares the time which preceded the Birth of Christ and the Preaching of the Gospel, with that which follow'd them. In that which preceded them, Oracles still subsisted, Devils still deceiv'd Mankind by the Illusions of their prophetick Answers. In the time which follow'd, that is since the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the Publication of his Gospel, Devils were cast out, Oracles were put to silence. Tho' the Words of *Ensebins* had been obscure or ambiguous, I should think this comparison he makes, of the time that preceded Christ with that which follow'd him, might of it self have convinc'd you, that he was not of the Opinion you ascribe to him.

But let us hear the other Fathers, who will yet more clearly shew your mistake, and teach us what we are to understand, by Oracles being said to have ceas'd at the Birth of our Saviour. "Formerly, says St. *Athanasius*\*, the Oracles of *Delphos* and *Dodona*, of *Bæotia*, *Lycia* and *Egypt* were full of the impostures of *Magick*.

CHAP. III.  
What the other Fathers thought concerning the time when Oracles were silenced: And particularly S. *Athanasius*.

\* *Athanasius*, L. De Incarn. Verb. Dei. p. 101. Καὶ πάλαι μὲν τὰ θεῶν ἄρχαί τ' ἀπάτης τ' μασιῶν ἐπιπλήρωτο, καὶ τὰ ἐν Ἀθήναις, καὶ Δωδωνῇ, καὶ Βοιωτίᾳ, καὶ Λυκίᾳ, καὶ Λιβύῃ, καὶ Αἰγύπτῳ, καὶ καθέκαστος μανθιμάδα, καὶ ἡ Πυθίᾳ ἰθαυμάζοντο τῇ φασίᾳ ὡς τ' ἀνθρώπων. νῦν δ' ἀφ' ἡμετέρου καὶ γεγενημένης πανταχῇ πίστεως καὶ τέτων ἡ μαγία, καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἐπίλοιπης ἐν αὐτοῖς ὁ μαθηδωδωθῆ. Καὶ πάλαι μὲν δαίμονες ἱερῶν ἀσυνέκωπον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, πρὸς ἀπάγαν καὶ ἀνέστησαν ψήφους, ἡ ψήφους, ἡ ξύλα, ἡ λίθους, καὶ ἔτι τ' μαγισσῶν καὶ ἡμετέρου καὶ ἀφροσύνης. Νῦν δ' ὁ δόξας ἐμφανείας τ' λόγους γεγενημένης πίστεως καὶ τέτων ἡ φασίᾳ τῶν δ' ἐμῶν τ' ταῦτ' ἡ μέντοι ἐν ἀνθρώποις χροῶμεθα ἀπὸ τῶν τέτων τὰς ἀπάτας.

"The Priestess *Pythia* was admir'd by all the  
 "World; but since Christ has been proclaim'd  
 "every where, this Madness is at an end, and  
 "we see no more of these Diviners: Hereto-  
 "fore Devils, having possess'd themselves of  
 "Fountains and Rivers, of Idols of Wood or  
 "Stone, seduc'd Men with their Delusions;  
 "but now that the Son of God has appear'd,  
 "these Impostures are ceas'd: Because they  
 "are made to disappear by the bare Sign of the  
 "Cross. It is evident *St. Athanasius* did not  
 pretend, that all Oracles had ceas'd at the very  
 moment of our Saviour's Birth. Seeing he says  
 expressly, that it was only since he appear'd,  
 and was every where proclaim'd, and adds,  
 that all these Illusions were made to disappear  
 by the Sign of the Cross, which it's certain be-  
 gan not to be in use, till after the Death of our  
 Saviour, when the grand Mystery of his Cross  
 was own'd, as the principle and cause of Man's  
 Salvation.

*Tertullian,*  
*St. Cyprian,*  
*Minutius Felix,*  
*and Lactantius*  
*do also suppose,*  
*as he does, that*  
*Oracles did not*  
*all cease at the*  
*time of Christ's*  
*Birth.*

Besides you might have observ'd in the first  
 Part of this Answer, that the same *St. Atha-*  
*nasius*, as well as *Tertullian*, *St. Cyprian*, *Minu-*  
*tius Felix*, and *Lactantius* invite the Heathens  
 themselves to be witnesses of the manner, in  
 which Christians cast out Devils out of the  
 Oracles and those that deliver'd them, by the  
 Sign of the Cross, and the Invocation of the  
 Name of *Jesus Christ*. Does not this also evi-  
 dently shew how far they were from believing,  
 that Oracles had all ceas'd from the moment of  
 our Saviour's Birth? Could they have made this  
 challenge to the Heathen, if there were not yet  
 remaining in their time, in the Places where

Idolatry still subsisted, some of those false Prophets of the Devil?

But let us further hear St. Athanasius, who will teach us, that it was indeed only as Christianity was settled in the World; that the delusions of Oracles did proportionably cease, through the Power of the Cross of Christ. For thus he concludes in his Book *de Incarnatione verbi Dei*,

<sup>1</sup> Athanas. ibid. p. 108, 109. Τὸτο ἔν μὲν τὰ προσηνέ-  
μεθα καταμαθεῖν (εἰ ἄξιον ὄναι, ὡς ἀρχὴν τῆς ἡδὴ λαχόντων  
τῶν διδῶν καὶ δαυμάσαι· λίαν, ὅτι, τῇ Σωτῆρι ἐπιδημι-  
σαντῇ, ἔκ ἐτι μὴ ἤνυσεν ἡ εἰδωλολατρεία, καὶ ἡ ἔσα ἡ  
ἐλαττωμένη) καὶ κατ' ὁλίγον παύει. Καὶ ἔκ ἐτι ἡ Ἑλλή-  
ων (σοφία περικύπτει, καὶ ἡ ἔσα ἡ λοιπὸν ἀφανίζεται), καὶ  
δαίμονες μὴ ἐκ ἐτι παντασίαι καὶ μαθηταίς καὶ μαθηταίς  
ἀπαίστοι, μόνον δὲ τολμήτες καὶ ἐπιχειροῦντες καταμαθεῖν  
τὸ σμῆμα τῆς ταυρῆς. Καὶ Συλλήβωσι εἰτείν, θεωρεῖ πῶς  
ἡ μὲν τῇ Σωτῆρι διδασκαλία πανταχοῦ αὐξάνει, πᾶσα δὲ  
εἰδωλολατρεία καὶ πᾶσα τὰ ἐσθλὰ τῶν τῇ Χριστῷ πίστι,  
καθ' ἡμέραν ἐλαττωμένη, καὶ ἡ κατὰ τὴν πίστιν ἔσται. Θε-  
σίων προσηνέμεθα μὴ ἂν πᾶν τὸν Σωτῆρα καὶ φυλάξον Θεόν  
Λόγον· καταγίνωσκε δὲ τῇ ἐλαττωμένῃ καὶ ἀφανισμένῃ ἔσ-  
αυτῶν. ὡς γὰρ ἡλὶς παρέρχεται, ἔκ ἐτι τὸ σκοτὸν ἰχθύς,  
ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰ πῶς δὲ περικλυμένον ἀπὸ τῶν ἑσθλῶν, ἔσως ἐλθ-  
ὸν δὲ θεῶν ἐμφανέμεθα τῷ Θεῷ Λόγῳ, ἔκ ἐτι μὴ ἰχθύς τὰ  
εἰδωλὸν σκοτὸν. πᾶντα δὲ τὰ πάντα καὶ τὸ οἰκουμενικὸν μῆν,  
τῇ τότε διδασκαλίᾳ καταμαθεῖν. Καὶ ὡς τὸν Βασιλέ-  
οντος τινος, καὶ μὴ φαινομένου ἐν τινὶ χώρῃ, ἀλλ' ἐνδον  
ῶντος ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ οἴκῳ, πολλάκις τινὲς ἀτακτοὶ κατα-  
χρώμενοι τῇ τότε ἀναχωρήσει, εὐλογοῦντες ἀναφορᾶν, καὶ  
ἐκαστὸν καταμαθεῖν τὸν ἀναχωρήσαντα τὸν ἀναχωρήσαντα  
πᾶσι ὡς βροτικῶν. Καὶ ἔτι πᾶν τὸν οἱ ἀνθρώποι πᾶν  
ὀνόματι ἀκούοντες γὰρ ἐπὶ Βασιλείᾳ, ἐκ ὁρῶντες τὸ αὐτὸν, διὰ  
τὸ μάλιστα μὴ εἶναι ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸν ἔσθ' οἶκος χωρῆσαι.  
ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὁ ἀληθὴς Βασιλεὺς προσέλην καὶ φανῇ· τότε οἱ  
μὴ ἀπαρτίτες ἀτακτοὶ ἐλπίστον τῇ τότε παντοφίᾳ. οἱ  
δὲ ἀνθρώποι ὁρῶντες τὸν ἀληθῆς Βασιλέα καταμαθεῖν τὸν  
πᾶντα πᾶν τῶν αὐτῶν. ἔτι καὶ πᾶν τὸν ἡπείρου οἱ  
δαίμονες τὸν ἀνθρώπου, Θεὸν τιμῶν ἐαυτοῖς περὶ τὸν  
ὅτε δὲ ἐόρην ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος ἐν Ῥώμῃ. Καὶ ἐφάνησαν  
ἡμῖν τῇ ἐκείνῃ παύσει, τότε δὲ ἡ μὴ τῇ ἐκείνῃ ἀπάτη  
ἀφανίζεται καὶ παύει. οἱ δὲ ἀνθρώποι ἀπορῶντες εἰς τὸ ἀληθ-  
νῆς τῇ παύσει Θεῶν Λόγον, καταμαθεῖν τὸν ἀληθ-  
νῆς καὶ λοιπὸν ἐπισυνάγουσι τὸ ἀληθινὸν Θεόν.

where to prove the Truth of this great Mystery he particularly makes use of this miraculous Event, as of a sensible and evident Argument,

*Another Proof taken also from St. Achanasius, which shews clearly what his Opinion was upon this Subject.*

to which nothing could be answer'd. " After  
 " all we have mention'd, says this Father, here  
 " is one thing which deserves to be particularly  
 " consider'd, as the chief of all, and most wor-  
 " thy of Admiration: That since the Son of  
 " God appear'd on the Earth, Idolatry has not  
 " increas'd, but on the contrary diminishes,  
 " and grows daily weaker. The Wisdom of  
 " the *Gentiles* makes no further progress, and  
 " what remains of it wastes away. The De-  
 " vils no longer seduce Men by their Illusions,  
 " their Oracles, and their Magick: But when  
 " they yet presume to attempt it, they are im-  
 " mediately put to confusion by the Sign of the  
 " Cross. In one Word, consider how the Do-  
 " Strine of our Saviour spreads and gains  
 " strength every where, and how on the con-  
 " trary Idolatry, and all that opposes the Chri-  
 " stian Religion, diminishes, grows weak, and  
 " falls to decay. When you see this, adore  
 " the Power of the Son of God, and contemn  
 " all these Superstitions, which he makes to  
 " disappear: For as darkness has no more force  
 " in the Presence of the Sun: And if ought of  
 " it yet remain any where, it is soon dissipated:  
 " So since the Son of God has appear'd, the  
 " darkness of Idolatry has no more force; and  
 " all parts of the World are fill'd with the  
 " Light of his Doctrine. And as it happens,  
 " that when a King continues shut up in his Pa-  
 " lace, and does not appear in publick, there  
 " are turbulent Spirits, that take advantage of  
 " his absence to usurp the Royal Title and Au-  
 " thority. Thereby the People fall into Er-  
 " rour, because knowing they have a King and  
 " not

“not seeing him, they adhere to those whom  
 “they see assuming his Name: But when the  
 “true King comes to appear, the imposture of  
 “these Usurpers is discover’d; and the People  
 “owning their lawful Sovereign, abandon those  
 “that had seduc’d them. It is thus that Devils  
 “formerly deceiv’d Mankind, usurping the  
 “Name, and the Honours which belong to God  
 “alone. But since the *Divine Word* has shewn  
 “himself upon Earth, and made his Father  
 “known to Men, the Imposture of those Devils  
 “vanishes, and Men considering the *Incarnate*  
 “*Word*, abandon Idols, and own the true God  
 “for the future. In my opinion St. *Arbanaſius*  
 could not speak more clearly, nor make use  
 of more sensible Comparisons to shew, that  
 Oracles did not cease all at once, any more  
 than Idolatry, at the Birth of Christ; but by  
 little and little, as he made himself known to  
 Men, and as the World was enlightned by the  
 bright Beams of the Gospel.

S. Cyril<sup>\*</sup> answering *Julian the Apostate*, who <sup>The Testimony</sup> own’d that Oracles were ceas’d, but attributed the <sup>of St. Cyril of</sup> Cause of this cessation, as most of the Heathens <sup>Alexandria,</sup> did, to the length of time, and the changes it <sup>concerning the</sup> brings, has these Words: “I commend his <sup>time when Ora-</sup> cles were put to  
 “sincerity in that he acknowledges, that the <sup>silence.</sup> diabolick Inspiration, with which these false

\* Cyrillus Alexandr. L. 6. contra Julianum. p. 198. Τὸ  
 ἐν τέτοις ἔνδεα πάλιν διακελευθὲν ἐκδοῦναι. οὐσί.  
 καὶ ἐπαύσε τοῦ λόγου· πάλιν ἡρώδης ἔαλει τὴν  
 ἀποστολὴν τὴν ἐκείνην, ἀποστολῆσαι δὲ κατὰ οὐκὸν αὐτῶν  
 αὐτοῦ χρηστὴν· ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἐκείνην πρὸς πλοῦτον  
 Χερσὸς, καὶ ἐκείνην πρὸς τὴν ἐκείνην· δαμῶναι, καὶ οὐ  
 τις οὐκὸν μαρτυροῦν αὐτοῦ ἐκείνην· ἀποδο  
 δέει, καὶ τὴν ἐκείνην γὰρ οὐκὸν καὶ οὐκὸν, καὶ οὐ  
 πάλιν ἔσθ’ ἡλὶν ἀποδοῦναι καὶ ἀποδοῦναι τοῦ καὶ αὐ  
 τοῦ δαμῶναι.

" Prophets were animated, is entirely ceas'd:  
 " Yet he is ignorant of the true Cause, which  
 " has thus oblig'd lying to cease, and put to fi-  
 " lence the true and natural Oracles, as he calls  
 " them: For 'tis since the World has been en-  
 " lightned with the Gospel of Jesus Christ,  
 " that the Empire of Devils has been thus  
 " overthrown, that all their Illusions, like the  
 " amusements of Children, have been dissipa-  
 " ted, and that these impure and evil Spirits  
 " have been shut up in Hell. After having  
 thus produc'd the true Cause of the cessation  
 of Oracles, he confutes that which *Julian* had  
 mention'd, and what he had afterwards ad-  
 ded, that in defect of these natural Oracles  
*Jupiter* had allow'd Men the knowledg of cer-  
 tain Arts, which he calls sacred. That is to  
 say, as *St. Cyril* reproaches him with it, the  
 most execrable *Theurgie* and *Magick*, to which  
*Julian*, and most of the Philosphers of his  
 time were addicted even to Madness: Which  
 (to observe that by the way) justifies what  
 the Fathers<sup>1</sup> and the Ecclesiastick Historians  
 have related of unheard-of cruelties, which  
 this wretched Emperour committed, to gra-  
 tifie his Passion on that Subject, the frightful  
 remains of which were discover'd after his  
 Death, both in his Palace, and in the Tem-  
 ples of the Idols, where he had exercis'd his  
 diabolick Art.

<sup>1</sup> Gregor. Nazianz. Orat. 3. in Julianum. p. 91. Παραδου-  
 μέναι κ' ἡ βασιλείᾳ τὰ νοῖα κ' ἀπαθάρτω, ὁσά τε ἐν  
 λαοῖς κ' ὁρεσσὶ κ' ὄρεινῃ, καὶ ἐν γέμοις θνητῶν  
 τε κ' μυσηρίων. κ' μὲν τῶν ἀναβρίνοντων παίδων τε κ' ἡ  
 παρθένων ἐπὶ ψυχῶν κ' μνήσας, κ' θυσιᾶς ἡ νεο-  
 μυσθίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς εὐσεβείας κινδυνεύοντων.

Vide præterea Theodorum. L. 3. Hist. Eccles. c. 26, & 32.

The same Author<sup>m</sup>, in his Commentaries upon the Prophet *Isaiah*, expresses himself upon this Subject in a manner yet more clear. “ Be-  
 “ fore that our Saviour *Jesus Christ* had ap-  
 “ pear’d upon Earth, says this Father, the De-  
 “ vil had every where establish’d his Tyranny;  
 “ all Men were plung’d in profound Darknesse  
 “ One saw in all places Altars and Temples of  
 “ Idols, an innumerable multitude of Images  
 “ and false Gods, Incantments and Oracles,  
 “ Illusions and Impostures of Devils; who pre-  
 “ tended to know and foretel things to come,  
 “ tho’ in reality they neither foreknew, nor  
 “ foretold any thing. But after that the true  
 “ Light, that is to say, the only begotten Son  
 “ of God had enlightn’d all the Earth by the  
 “ Oracles of his Gospel; after the darknes of  
 “ Sin had been dissipated; and all Men who till  
 “ then had been in Errour, were call’d to the  
 “ knowledg of the Truth; Then all the Illusions

<sup>m</sup> Cyrillus Comment. in *Isaiah*, L. iv. Orat. 2. p. 596.  
 Οὕτω γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐπλάμψαντο καὶ ἑρῶν τὸ πᾶν ἡ-  
 μῶν Σάτες καὶ τὸ διαβόλιον τυραννίδος ἡ πλεονε-  
 ξία καὶ πᾶν κακόν, καὶ βαθεῖα πάντα τὰ ἐπὶ τῇ  
 γῆς κατεβόσκετο σκότος. Ἡ δὲ καὶ κατέχευεν καὶ  
 πόλιν Βαβυλὼν καὶ τερμῆν καὶ ἀσάλματων ἐσμός καὶ ψευδομα-  
 ρτυρίας Θεῶν ἐν αὐθιμυκύνῃ πολλὴν, γοητείας καὶ ψευδομαρ-  
 τυρίας πανταχῶς, καὶ δαιμονίων φανατισμοὶ πλατύνοντες μὴ  
 εἶδέναι τε καὶ παραγγέλλειν διδάσκει τὰ ἐσόμενα, λεγόν-  
 των γε μὴν ἢ εἰδόντων παντὶ ὡς εἶναι. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ τὸ  
 φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, τὸ εἶναι, ὁ μονογενὴς τῷ Θεῷ Λόγος  
 τοῖς ἀναγινωκοῖς διαπίσματος ἅλην πεποίηκε τὸ  
 ἔσθον, ἀπύχον μὴ ἢ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν ἀχλὺς, καὶ ὁ βαθεῖς  
 ἐκείνους πᾶσαν σκότον, κέκλυται δὲ πρὸς ἐπίγνωσιν  
 ἀληθείας οἱ πλεονηκτοὶ τότε, τότε διεσκεδάσθη  
 τὰ σημεῖα τὰ ἐγχαρμύθων — διεσκεδάσθη τριάρη τὸ  
 τοῖς τὰ ἐκ τῆς ψευδομαρτυρίας διδόμενα τῶν σημεῖα,  
 ἢ τὰ παραπλάνησις, ἢ τὰ ἑλλωμένα χρησθέντα  
 πανταχῶς, καὶ σεσιγῆσιν οἱ ψευδοεταῖροι εἰσθότες τὸ παρ’  
 ἑλλοσι δεινόν.

“ of

“ of false Prophets disappear’d ——— The  
 “ Wonders and Predictions of false Divi-  
 “ nation were brought to nothing; The Oracles  
 “ of the *Gentiles* every where ceas’d; And  
 “ the Gods that had been us’d to vend Fals-  
 “ hoods, were put to silence. Can we doubt  
 after this, what was the Opinion of the Fathers  
 concerning the time, when Oracles ceas’d? Can  
 we still charge them with having believ’d, that  
 they all ceas’d at the very moment of our Savi-  
 our’s Birth?

*The Testimony  
 of Theodoret  
 in the same  
 case.*

To the Testimony of St. Cyril I add that of  
 Theodoret \*, who is no less clear, nor less ex-  
 press concerning the time when Oracles ceas’d.  
 “ Before the coming of *Jesus Christ*, says this  
 “ Father, Devils seduc’d Men in a thousand  
 “ manners; but since the Light of the Truth  
 “ has appear’d, they have taken their flight,  
 “ and abandon’d their Oracles. A little af-  
 ter • he adds these words. “ The Devils  
 “ there-

\* Theodorus adversus Græcos. Serm. 10. de Oraculis.  
 p. 631, 632. Περὶ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ ἡμεῶν Θεοῦ φησὶ ὁπτανείας,  
 εἶναι περὶ τινος (ὅπου ἂν οἰκονομήσω καὶ ἰσχυρῶς), καθάπερ τινες  
 λησάει καὶ λαποδοῦν, οἱ δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἀλάστορες οἱ αὐμωτὸν  
 εἰσι δαίμονες, καὶ λόγοις ἐχέουσιν, καὶ πάσαις καὶ ἀρεταῖς  
 παρὰ σοφίαις, ἀπειροῖς δὲ ἀνθρώπων καὶ οὐσίαν ἔπειθ’ ὅτι  
 ἀνέχεσθαι δὲ ἀληθείας τὸ φῶς, ἐδραπέδωσάν τε ἀπάσης, καὶ τὴν  
 οἰκίαν κατέλιπον χερσίν.

\* Idem. ibid. p. 632. Θεοδοσίος τοῖνυν πνευματικῶς δια-  
 τρέχον δὲ ἀληθείας τὸ κήρυγμα, καθάπερ εὐαγγελιστὴς πορεύεται,  
 πολλὰ δεινὰ καὶ θαύματα διεδρασκεῖται, ἅτα δὲ τὸ Βασι-  
 λῆος αἰδωόμενοι παρυσίας, ἀπέδρασαν, καὶ γυμνάς τὰς ἐν-  
 δρας κατέκυτον. Ὁ δὲ τὸν Βασιλῆος τὰ τέτατον κατέ-  
 λυσεν ὁρμηστέα. Καὶ ἔτι δὲ Κασαλίας πρεσβυτέρῳ τὸ  
 εἰπὼν, ὅτι Κολοσσαῖος ἡ πόλις πρὸς τὴν ἑσπέρην, ἐχ’ ὁ δὲ αὐτῶν  
 τῶν λίθων μαρτυρεῖ, ἐχ’ ὁ τετὰς ὁ κήρυξ χρησμοπο-  
 γῆς, καὶ τὸ Δαδωνάτον χαλαροῖεν ἀποκτείναν, ἐχ’ ἡ σπουδαία  
 καὶ ὁ φησὶ δεινὰ. Ἀλλὰ (ὅτι μὲν ὁ Δαδωνάτος,  
 σιγὰ

" therefore seeing the Truth proclaim'd every  
 " where, have taken flight like wretched Fugi-  
 " tives, who know themselves guilty of many  
 " Crimes, and are sensible of the approach of  
 " their Master. They have left their ancient  
 " Dwellings empty, and now the Fountain of  
 " *Castalia* delivers Oracles no longer, any more  
 " than that of *Colophon*, than the *Basins* of *Dodo-*  
 " *na*, or the *Tripos* of *Delphos*. He had said  
 before, that one of the Marks which shew'd,  
 that Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, was  
 the silence to which they were reduc'd: " For,  
 " continues he, after our Saviour appear'd,  
 " these evil Spirits which seduc'd Men, took  
 " their flight, being no longer able to bear the  
 " brightness of the Divine Light. At last ha-  
 ving mention'd the Testimony of *Plutarch* con-  
 cerning the silence of Oracles, he adds:  
 " By what *Plutarch* has written since our Savi-  
 " our's coming, it appears what occasion'd the  
 " silence of Oracles.

The Poet *Apudantius*, who was also an excel- *That of the Poet*  
 lent Divine and a very learned Man, among *Prudencius.*  
 the Proofs he produces to convince the *Jews* of

σιγα ἢ ὁ Κολοφώνι, καὶ Δήλι, καὶ Πύθι, καὶ Κλά-  
 ει, καὶ Διδυμαῖ, καὶ ἡ Λαβυρία, καὶ ὁ Τερρώνι, καὶ  
 ὁ Ἀμφίλοχ, καὶ ὁ Ἀμφίδρα, καὶ ὁ Ἀμμων, καὶ ἡ  
 Χαλδαίων καὶ Τυρρηνῶν νεκρά. Σιγαῖν γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἐπέδρασαν  
 ὁ ὁμιλιῶν ἀδύσσω, καὶ ἡ Περρητιῶν, καὶ Ζευραίων αὐτῶν.

\* Idem. *ibid.* p. 624. Ὅτι ἡ παμπονηρεῶν ἦν δαυμόνων  
 ταῦτα χρησίμεια, καὶ δεῖαν προσήσθαιαν ἐξουλοχόντων,  
 ἰκανὴ μὲν τεκμηριῶσαι καὶ ἡ νῦν αὐτοῖς ἐπικειμένη Σιγή·  
 μὴ γὰρ δὴ καὶ ἡ Σωφίης ἡμῶν ἐπιδραῖαν, ἀπὲρ δὲ οἱ  
 τῶν δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀπάτιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις προσφάσιντες καὶ δεῖαν  
 φῶς ἐκ ἐνέγκουσιν καὶ ἀλλῶν.

\* Idem. *ibid.* p. 625. Ταῦτα μὴ καὶ ἡ Σωφίης  
 ἡμῶν ἐπιδραῖαν ὁ Πλάταρχος ἐξέταξε· τοῖς δὲ οἱ ὁ χρε-  
 ῖος δηλοῖ καὶ ἡ χρησιμείων ἐκλείψας καὶ αὐτίαν.

the

the Divinity of Christ, lays great stress, as the other Fathers likewise do, upon the silence of Oracles. "Since the Incarnation of the Son of God, says this great Man, the Oracles of *Delphos, Dodona, Ammon*, and all the other false Prophets of the *Gentiles*, have been put to silence. The *Capitol* groans to see the *Roman* Princes become Christian, and the Temples of Idols overthrown by their order. The Emperours fall prostrate before the Altars of Christ, and adore the standard of his Cross. If to know this Author's Opinion concerning the Subject in question, it be not sufficient for you that he has said, 'tis since the Incarnation of the Son of God, and not at the moment of his Birth, that Oracles ceas'd; you may consider, that he joyns the overthrow of the Temples of Idols, and the destruction of the *Pagan* Religion with this miraculous Event: And thereby you may be convinc'd, that he was, as all the other Fathers were, of an Opinion very different from that, which you have ascrib'd to them.

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Prudentius in Apotheosi adversus Judæos. l. 435.

Ex quo morealem præstrinxit spiritus alvum,  
 Spiritus ille Dei, Deus, & se corpore matris  
 Induit, atq; hominem de virginitate creavit:  
 Delphica damnaris tacuerunt sortibus antra,  
 Non Tripodas cortina regit, non spumat anhelus  
 Fata Sibyllinis fanaticus edita libris.  
 Perdidit insanos mendax Dodona vapores:  
 Mortua jam mutæ lugent Oracula Cumæ:  
 Nec responsa refert Libycis in Syrtibus Ammon  
 Ipsa suis Christum capitolia Romula mcerent  
 Principibus lucere Deum, destructaq; Tempia  
 Imperio cecidisse Ducum, jam purpura supplex  
 Sternitur Æneadæ rectoris ad atria Christi,  
 Vexillumq; Crucis summus Dominator adorat.

The ancient and learned <sup>That of the</sup> Author of *the Questions and Answers to the Orthodox*, which <sup>Author of the</sup> are found in the Works of *Justin Martyr*, says, <sup>Questions and</sup> "That our Saviour had made the Devil dumb, <sup>Answers to</sup> the Orthodox, who had possess'd himself of the Image of <sup>concerning Ora-</sup> *Apollonius Tyanæus*, and by the Oracles he <sup>cles in general,</sup> deliver'd seduc'd Men, and made them wor- <sup>and that of</sup> ship this Impostor as a God: That he had, <sup>Apollonius</sup> says he, put his Oracles to silence, as well as <sup>Tyanæus in</sup> *particular*, all the rest that were deliver'd by Devils, under the name of Gods which the Heathens worship'd: And this is evidently seen, says he, by the condition these Oracles are in at present. Will you say likewise that this Author believ'd, that the Oracle of *Apollonius* ceas'd, as well as all the rest, at the time of Christ's Birth, that is, before it did yet exist?

Lastly, *St. Jerome* writing upon *Isaiah*, on <sup>A Passage of</sup> occasion of these Words, which the Prophet <sup>St. Jerome on</sup> addresses to the Gods of the Heathens, to ridi- <sup>the same Sub-</sup> cule them, *declare us things for to come: Shew the* <sup>ject.</sup> *things that are to come hereafter.* Ch. 41. 22, 23. "The Prophet speaks thus, says he, because "Idols were put to silence after our Savi- "our's coming. And then immediately adds:

<sup>f</sup> *Author Quest. & Respons. ad Orthodoxos apud Justinum.*  
*Respons. ad Quest. 24. Αὐτὸν ὃ ἡ δαίμονα ἢ ἐν τῷ κεί-  
 νῳ ἀσάλλῃσι ἰδρυκλῶσιν, ἢ ἐν ἡ μαρτίαις ἀπαλίσαντα τοῦ  
 ἀνθρώπου, ὡς διὰ τὸν ἑβραῖον καὶ τιμῶν ἢ Ἀπολλώνιον, ἐφίμωσε,  
 καὶ ἀργῶσας αὐτῶν τὰς μαρτίαις. Ὡς αὐτῶν ὃ καὶ τῶ λοιπῶν  
 δαιμόνων ἢ ἐν τῇ δυνάμει ἐνὶ τῇ ἑλληνικῇ τιμωρῶ-  
 σιν καθέλει ἢ δυνατῶν, καθὼς ὁρατὶ τὰ πρᾶγματα. ἔχον-  
 τες ὃ ἐν τέτοις ἢ ἡ κεῖσθ' ὁ δὲ δυνάμει τὰ γνωρίσματα  
 ἢ χεὶρ λείπει τὰ ἢ χεῖσθ' δαίμονα ἐν ψυχῇ καὶ δυνάμει.*

<sup>f</sup> *Hieronym. in caput 41 Isaie, v. 22, 23. p. 158. Hoc autem significat, quod post adventum Christi omnia Idoli conticuerunt. Ubi Apollo Delphicus: & Loxias, Deliusq; & Clarius, & cætera Idola futurorum scientiam pollicentia, quæ reges potentissimos deceperunt? &c.*

"Where

" Where is now, says he, the *Apollo* of *Delphos*,  
 " of *Delos*, of *Claros*, and all the other Deities,  
 " who took upon them to foretel things to  
 " come, and have deceiv'd the greatest Kings?  
 In my Opinion, Sir, these Authorities may be  
 sufficient to convince you, that neither *Eusebius*,  
 nor the other Fathers say, what you suppose  
 they do, that Oracles ceas'd precisely at the  
 Birth of Christ, but only afterward, when he  
 was known and worship'd, and his Doctrine  
 publish'd in the World.

CHAP. IV. Nevertheless that you may be yet further  
*Eusebius as-* convinc'd of their Opinion, you may in the  
*signs the same* first place recollect, that *Eusebius* \* has said,  
*time to the ces-* that the barbarous Custom of sacrificing Men  
*sation of Ora-* ceas'd at the same time with Oracles. Now  
*cles, and to the* he did not pretend, that this Custom ceas'd pre-  
*extinction of* cisely at the Birth of our Saviour: On the con-  
*the Custom of* trary he says \* positively in more places than  
*sacrificing Men,* one, that it did not cease till long time after,  
*viz. the time* viz. under the reign of *Hadrian*. Nor did he  
*of the preach-* therefore pretend, as you suppose he did, that  
*ing of the Gos-* Oracles ceas'd precisely at the Birth of Christ;  
*pel.* but only afterward; and that 'tis only since

\* Euseb. L. 3. Præp. Evang. c. 17. loco supra relato. p. 163.

\* Idem. L. 4. cap. 15. p. 154. Δίλυται γὰρ αὐτῶν καὶ καθυγῆται ἐκ ἀλλοῦ, ὃ καὶ πρὸ Ἀδείαντος χρόνου, φησὶ δίκην ἡδὴ διαλαμπύσης ἐπὶ πάντας τόπους τῆς Ἑλλάδος διδασκαλίας. Et cap. sequenti. p. 156. Καταλυθῆναι δὲ τὰς ἀνθρωποθυσίας καὶ τὴν τὰς πόλεων πόλιν φησὶ Πάλλας ὁ ἄετις πρὶν τῆς Μίδου (ὑποφασάντων) μωτηκῶν, ἐπὶ Ἀδείαντος ἢ Αὐτοκράτορος. Et cap. 17. p. 164. Ὅτι δὴ μετὰ τῆς Ἀδείαντος χρόνου διαμῆναι ταῦτα, λεγόντις δὲ ὅτι ἐκείνη παρέστη ὁ τῆς ἰσοείας Λόγος. ὅτι δὴ μάλιστα ἦν ὁ χρόνος, καθ' ὃν ἡ Καθάρσις εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἤκουσε διδασκαλίας.

Vide eundem Orat. de laudibus Constantini.

then, that they have been found Dumb, and have given no Answers, which as he affirms, never happen'd before. Indeed tho' they might have been destroy'd by Wars, plunder'd and ruin'd by divers Accidents, yet it never came to pass, till after the Birth of our Saviour and the preaching of his Gospel; that the Temples subsisting in all their ancient Splendor; the Priests offering the accustomed Sacrifices; the People coming as usual, to ask Responses and Predictions concerning things to come, they could obtain none, but found the Oracle Dumb. This is what threw all the Heathens into Astonishment, and oblig'd *Plutarch* to inquire into the cause of an Event so extraordinary.

You may observe, *Secondly*, That in like *St. Athanasius* manner some of the Fathers \*, as *St. Athanasius* <sup>joyns together</sup> as do in particular say, that Oracles ceas'd af- <sup>the silence of</sup> <sup>Oracles and</sup> <sup>the Extinction</sup> <sup>of Idolatry and</sup> <sup>Magick: Which</sup> <sup>shews what his</sup> <sup>Opinion was</sup> <sup>concerning the</sup> <sup>Subject in ques</sup> <sup>tion.</sup> ter the Birth of our Lord, as well as Idolatry and all the Impostures of *Magick*. But you can't say they believ'd, that *Magick* and *Idolatry* did intirely cease at the Birth of our Saviour, so as that from that Moment they were, the one as well as the other, wholly abolish'd: Nor can you therefore suppose that they believ'd, that Oracles were absolutely put to silence from that Moment.

\* *Athanas. L. de Incarn. Verbi Dei. p. 100.* Πότε τῶν εὐδίων θρησκείαν ἤρξαντο καταλιμπάνειν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, εἰ μὴ ἀφ' οὗ γέγονεν ὁ ἀληθινὸς τῷ Θεῷ Λόγῳ ἐν ἀνθρώποις; πότε δὲ τὰ πάρ' Ἑλλήσι καὶ πανταχῶς μαντεῖα πέπαυτο καὶ κενώθη, εἰ μὴ ὅτε μέλει γῆς πεφανέρωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὁ Σωτὴρ— πότε δὲ ἡ δαιμόνων ἀπάτη καὶ μανία κατεφρονήθη, εἰ μὴ ὅτε ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ δύναμις ὁ Λόγος, ὁ πάντων καὶ τῶν δαιμόνων, διὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀδένειαν (ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ γῆς ἐφάνη; πότε δὲ τὰ ματεῖα ἡ τέχνη καὶ τὰ διδασκαλεῖα ἤρξαντο καταπαύεσθαι, εἰ μὴ ὅτε τὰ θεοφάνια τῷ Λόγῳ γέγονεν ἐν ἀνθρώποις;

N

Thirdly,

The Fathers ordinarily ascribe the silence of Oracles to the power of the Sign of the Cross.

Thirdly, You may consider that the Fathers say, that the most ordinary way in which Oracles were put to silence, and Devils cast out of them, was by vertue of the Sign of the Cross, as you will often see in what follows. Now it is evident that the Sign of the Cross was not in use at the time of our Saviour's Birth: It is therefore no less evident, that the Fathers did not believe, that Oracles were universally condemn'd to silence from the time of this Divine Birth, as you pretend.

They themselves mention Oracles deliver'd long after the Birth of Christ; which evidently shews, that they were not of the Opinion which is imputed to them.

Lastly, These very Fathers speak of Oracles deliver'd after the Death of our Saviour. Eusebius in the Life of the Emperor Constantine says, That the Apollo of Delphos had given this answer to those, who ask'd him why he no longer deliver'd Oracles as heretofore; That the just Men who then liv'd upon Earth, viz. the Christians, hinder'd him from speaking the Truth, and were the cause that the *Τριπύς*'s could no longer give any, but false and fraudulent Answers. In his Book *De Demonstra-*

Vide supra Athanas. & statim inferius Lactant. Prudent. Gregor. Nazianz. & alios.

Euseb. L. 2. de Vita Constantini. cap. 50. referens Edictum Constantini ad Provinciales, in quo Imperator ipse sic loquitur, tanquam rei gestæ testis: Τὸν Ἀπόλλων πῶ τιμω- καῦτα ἔρασε καὶ ἀνέστη τινὸς καὶ σκοπίου μυχῆ, καὶ ὁ δὲ ἔξ αὐτοῦ περὶ χεῖρας, ὡς ἀεὶ οἱ ἐπὶ τῇ γῆς δίκαιοι ἐμπόδον εἶεν τῷ ἀληθεύειν αὐτόν. Καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἰδίᾳ τοῖς τειχέ- δων τὰς μαρτυρίας ποιεῖται. Et cap. 51. Σε γὰρ τὸ ὕψιστον Θεὸν καλῶ, ημερώμενον τότε κομιδῇ παῖς ὑπαρχων, πῶς ὁ κατ' ἐκείνο καιρὸς παρὰ τοῖς Ῥωμαίων αυτοκρατοροσιν ἔχων τὰ πρῶτα δέλαιον ἀληθὲς δέλαιον, πάλιν δὲ εὐχλῶ ἠταρῆναι, καὶ τὸ δορυφορέειν αὐτὸν, τίνας ἀνείη οἱ παρὲς τῇ γῇ δίκαιοι πολυπραγμονῶν ἐπιπυθάρσει. Καὶ τις τῶν παρ' αὐτὸν θυηπόλων ἀποκρίσας, χεῖρας αὐτοῦ ἐκείνην ἔχον.

*sione Evangelicâ* \*, he produces those two most clear and positive Oracles, as you call them, concerning the Ascension and the Resurrection of our Lord, to prove by the concession of the Heathens themselves, and of their *Demons*, that our Saviour was neither an Impostor, nor a Magician. St. *John Chrysostome* †, *Theodore* ‡, and *Sozomen* § say positively, and prove with great force, that the famous Oracle of *Apollo* which was in *Daphne* the Suburbs of *Antioch*, was put to silence by the Power of the Martyr *Babylas*, when his Relicks were remov'd thither by *Gallus*, Brother to *Julian* the *Apostate*, under the Reign of *Constance*. St. *Gregory* of *Nyssa* ¶ relates, that St. *Gregory Thaumaturgus* put another of the same *Apollo's* Oracles to silence, which had subsisted till his time. *Theodore* † produces false and

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\* Id. L. 3. Demonstr. Evang. loco à nobis relato parte I. hujus Respons. p. 36.

† Chrysost. L. de S. Babyla. p. 458. Περὶ ἧς ἡ τῶν ὁμολογούντων διώξεως εἶπεν, ἐκεῖνο ἡμᾶς ἐστημιλυνάσθαι ἀξιώ, ὅτι ἐκ εὐθὺς αὐτὸν ἀνελθὼν ἤξεδεκεν, ἀλλὰ μόνον εἰς ἱεράσιο ἀπρεχίον, καὶ ἐπεσέμισε, καὶ τὸ λίθον ἀπέφωκεν ἀφ' ὧν ἦτο. Τὸ δὲ ἀπελάσαι, τὸ μόνον ὅτι πεινῶν ἐκ ἐλαττον ἦν καὶ ὁ πᾶσι παλαιὰ καὶ πρῶτον ἀπαρτῶν, ὡς δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἀνελθόντα ἐτόλμησε τὸ μακάριον Βαβύλα. Τὸ αὐτὴν τὴν αἰώνιον ἡ δυνάμεις, ὡς ἐν ἡμῶν μὲν ὡς τὰς ἑλπίδας εἴρουν, ὡς δὲ τὰ ἰμάτια, τὴν ἀνελθόντα ἡ καὶ τὰς λαοκρατίας τρέμουν. ὡς εἰ τις ἀπίσκει τοῖς ἰσχυροῖς καὶ ἀνελθόντων γὰρ ἡμῶν, τὰ παλαιὰ διωρῶν παύειν τὴν ἀνελθόντα ἀπὸ τοῦ. Ὁ γὰρ πᾶσι τὰ τὴν ἐλλήνων πάλαι νικῶν, καθάπερ ὡς δὲ πρὸς τὸ μάρτυρος ἐπὶ μόνον, ἐπαύσατο τὸ ὑλακῆς, καὶ ὡς ἐφ' ἐξέλετο.

‡ Theodorit. Sem. 10. De Oraculis. p. 632. Καθὰπερ ὁ μῆσις Παῦλος πρὸς τὸν Πύθωνα ἐπὶ μόνον ἀνελθόντα, ὡς ἡ τὸ μάρτυρος κνίς τὸ μάρτυρος ἐχθρῶντος καὶ τῶν.

§ Sozomen. Hist. Eccles. L. 5. cap. 19.

¶ Gregor. Nyss. in vitâ S. Gregorii Neocesar. p. 448, &c.

† Theodorit. L. 3. Hist. Eccles. cap. 21. Πόντος ἡ εἰς Διόσκους καὶ Δῆλον καὶ Δωδώνην καὶ τὰ ἄλλα χρησθεῖα, εἰ καὶ ἐξελθόντων ἐπὶ μόνον τοῦ μάρτυρος οἱ ἡ καὶ ἐξελθόντων ἐκεί-

and deceitful Oracles deliver'd to *Julian* the *Apostate* concerning the success of his Expedition against the *Persians*. Lastly, *St. Augustin*<sup>s</sup> has related some from *Porphyrus*, which represent Christians as Persons wretchedly abus'd, and Christianity as a miserable Error, and say that Christ was justly condemn'd to Death. Should not all this fully convince you, that these Fathers were not of the Opinion which you ascribe to them? Could they believe that all Oracles in general did absolutely cease at the time of our Saviour's Birth, and yet mention the very Answers of some, that subsisted long after the establishment of Christianity?

CHAP. V.  
The Heathens  
own'd that  
their Oracles  
ceas'd after  
the Birth of  
Christ,

Now it is of little moment, that some of these Oracles continu'd to the Reign of *Constantine*, or even beyond it. This long continuance of them is so far from overthrowing the Opinion of the Fathers in this point, as you pretend it does, that it is both a Declaration, and a full Confirmation of it: Yet it is certain that most Oracles did cease before that time; and 'tis

λαον, καὶ ὑποχρῶντο τῷ νικῶν. ἔνα δὲ τῷ χρησμοῦ εἰς ἐλεσχον τῷ Ἰδίδας ἐπὶ τῇ (συγγραφή, ἐστὶ δὲ ἑστῶ, γὰρ πάντες ἀρμήθηναι θεοὶ νίκης τρεῖς κομίσαντες, ὡς οὐκ ἐπὶ πολεμῶν. τῷ δὲ ἐστὶ ἡγεμονίᾳ δῶκεν πολεμῶντων ἀγῆς. Vide Eundem Serm. 10. de Oraculis.

<sup>s</sup> August. L. xix. de Civit. Dei c. 23. p. 661. Interroganti inquit (Porphyrus) quem Deum placando revocare possit uxorem suam à Christianismo, hæc ait versibus Apollō. Deinde verba velut Apollinis ista sunt. Fortè magis poteris in aquâ impressis literis scribere, aut inflans pennas leves per aëra ut avis volare, quàm semel pollucæ revoces impiz uxoris sensum. Pergat quomodò vult inanibus fallaciis perseverans, & lamentationibus fallacissimis mortuum deum cantans, quem iudicibus recta sententibus perditum, pessima in speciosis ferro juncta mors interfecit.

Vide alià Oracula in L. Parte hujus Responsi. p. 21, 29, 36, 37.

what

what you cannot deny: Since tho' you would not believe it upon the Credit of the Fathers, who both affirm it, and reproach the Heathens with it to their Faces, yet the Heathens themselves would convince you of it. Does not *Strabo* who writ a little after our Saviour's time, say expressly <sup>h</sup>, that in his time the Oracle of *Dodona* had ceas'd as well as many others? Does not *Juvenal* <sup>i</sup> acknowledge, That in his time the Oracle of *Delphos* gave no more Answers? Do not *Statius* <sup>k</sup>, and *Lucan* <sup>l</sup> say the same thing? Does not *Porphyry* <sup>m</sup> own, that they were sensible of no more publick kindness from the Gods, since Christ was worshipp'd; that *Æsculapius* and the other Deities had withdrawn themselves from among Men? Does not he acknowledge <sup>n</sup>, in the Verses he mentions and

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<sup>h</sup> Strabo Geogr. L. vii. sub finem, p. 327. Interprete G. Xylandro: sed & Oraculum Dodonzum defecit quemadmodum & reliqua.

<sup>i</sup> Juvenalis Satyra 6. L. 553.

————Credent à fonte relatum

Ammonis, quoniam Delphis oracula cessant.

<sup>k</sup> Statius Thebaid. L. viii. p. 235.

————Mutisq; diu plorabere Delphis.

<sup>l</sup> Lucan. Pharsal. L. v. p. 129.

————Non ullo sæcula donq

Nostra carent majore Deum, quam Delphica sedes

Quod siluit.————

<sup>m</sup> Porphyrius apud Eusebium L. v. Præp. Evang. c. 1. loco à nobis initio hujus tertiz partis p. 162. descripto, & apud Theodorum Sermon. 10. de Oraculis.

<sup>n</sup> Idem apud Euseb. L. v. Præp. Evang. c. 16. in Oraculis à nobis in I. Parte græcè relatis. p. 29. Ea sic latinè reddidit Vigerius Eusebii interpres. p. 204.

Pythia quod spectat, Clariq; oracula Phœbi,  
Dicam equidem, & sancta verum te voce docebo.

Sexcenta ex imis scatuere Oracula terris,  
Fontesq; & rapidâ sensus vertigine torquens

and you cite, that most Oracles had ceas'd by the failure, as he pretends, of those Vapours and Exhalations, which occasion'd the prophetic Enthusiasm?

*The Testimony of Plutarch concerning the cessation of Oracles, and the false Reasons which he brings for it.*

But there is nothing of more weight in this case than the Testimony of *Plutarch*°, who confesses that all Oracles were silenc'd, except two or three; and that in *Bœotia* particularly, formerly so fruitful a source of them, only that of *Tragœonius* still gave Responses. It is this so surprizing an Event, which obliges him to inquire into the cause of it, and to attribute it, sometimes to the Favours of the Gods, which he says, are not always eternal, and like the Gods themselves: Sometimes to Spirits that presid'd over Oracles, and are in his Opinion subject to death: And sometimes to the failure of the Exhalations of the Earth, which the Gods use as Instruments to communicate the Gift of Prophecy to Men. Are not all these Testimonies of the Heathens sufficient to convince us, that Oracles ceas'd for the most part before the Reign of *Constantine*, a little time after that the Son of

Halitus. Ast eadem vasta dein labe dehiscens

Hausit terra fima, pressuq; annoſa vetustas.

Idem (Apollo) Nicænsibus ita respondit:

Pythiacæ nequeunt revocari oracula vocis,

Quæ cani jamdudum ævi longinqua vetustas

Sustulit, ac mutâ claufere silentia clavi.

• *Plutarchus*, L. De Defectu Oraculorum. p. 732. Οὐδὲν ἔστι δὲ πλεῖστον ἐκείνῳ πυνθάνεσθαι καὶ διαπορεῖν ὅτι ἐξαίθερα καὶ χρησμελιῶν ἀμαυρώσιν, μᾶλλον δὲ πάλιν ἐνδοῦς ἢ δυνεῖν ἀπαρτίων ἐκλείψιν ὁρῶντας — τὰ γὰρ ἄλλα τί δὲ λέγειν; ὅτι καὶ Βοιωτίαν ἕνεκα χρησμελιῶν πολυφώνον ἔφ' ἐν τοῖς περὶ τούτων χρόνοις, νυνὶ ἐπιλείπονται κομιδῇ, καθάπερ καὶ μάλιστα, καὶ πολλὰ ἐπέχνηκε μαυρίκη ἀρχαῖος καὶ χύρος; καὶ δὲ γὰρ ἀλλὰ γὰρ νυνὶ ἢ πλεῖστον καὶ Λεσβίαν ἢ Βοιωτίαν παρ' ἑαυτῶν τοῖς χρόνοις ἀρυσάσθαι μαυρίκη; καὶ δὲ ἄλλων τῶν καὶ ἑνὶ χρόνῳ, τὰ δὲ παλαιότερα ἐρημία κατέχνηκε.

God

God had appear'd upon Earth, and that there were Christians in the World.

Can you doubt one Moment, Sir, from whence this proceeds? Is it possible after all we have said, that in this Event you are not sensible of the divine Power of Christ over Devils, the Authors of Oracles? A Power which he both exercis'd himself with so much Glory, while he liv'd upon Earth, and also communicated to his Disciples and to his Church. You remember without doubt, what the Apostle St. John <sup>P</sup> has said of him, *That he came to destroy the Works of the Devil*; and what he says <sup>1</sup> himself, *That the Prince of this World, that is the Devil, should suddenly be cast out*. You know with what Authority he did actually cast him out, and with what Success he destroy'd and overthrew all his Works, of which Idolatry and Oracles were none of the least pernicious. You are not ignorant how these evil Spirits, when constrain'd to fly from his Presence, besought him <sup>2</sup> not to oblige them to return into Hell. You know what he says to his Disciples <sup>3</sup>, *I have given you power to tread on Serpents and all the Power of the Enemy*, which they did with so wonderful success, that <sup>4</sup> themselves were surpriz'd at it, inso much that they

CHAP. VI.  
*The true cause of this Cessation was the Power of Christ over Devils, who were the Authors of Oracles, with what Authority he exercis'd it himself.*

*How he communicated it to his Disciples, and to his Church.*

<sup>1</sup> 1 Joh. iii. 8. *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.*

<sup>2</sup> Joh. xii. 31. *Now shall the Prince of this World be cast out.*

<sup>3</sup> Luk. viii. 31. *And they besought him, that he would not command them to go out into the deep (ut in abyssum irent)*

<sup>4</sup> Luk. x. 19. *Behold I give unto you Power to tread on Serpents, and Scorpions, and over all the Power of the Enemy.*

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. v. 17. *And the Seventy return'd again with joy, saying, Lord, even the Devils are subject unto us thro' thy Name.*

said, Behold, Lord, even the Devils are subject unto us through thy Name. You know, Lastly, That the first Grace which he promis'd a little after his Ascent into Heaven, to those " who should believe in him, was that of casting out Devils by the Invocation of his Name; and with what Authority, and in how many ways and different manners did the first Believers do this? Never it may be, was any thing seen so wonderful; and if I would follow my Inclination and enlarge a little on this Subject, what might I not say of it from the Testimony of the Fathers, and of the ancient Ecclesiastical Writers, there being not one of them, but what has mention'd this wonderful Power, which the Christians had to cast out Devils by the Invocation of the Name of Christ.

A Passage of Eusebius to this purpose.

" Who is ignorant ", says Eusebius, that 'tis usual for us to cast out Devils by the sole Pronunciation of the Name of Jesus, and by our Prayers? 'Tis the Word of Jesus, and the Doctrine which we have learn'd from him, which makes us thus superiour to all the invisible Powers.

One of Lactantius.

" It is enough " says Lactantius, to explain " at

" Mar. xvi. 17. And these Signs shall follow them that believe: In my Name shall they cast out Devils, &c.

" Euseb. L. iii. Demonstr. Evang. sub finem. p. 132. Τίς ἔκ' οὐδ' οὐκ, ὅπως σὺ αὐτῇ τῇ ᾤνοῦ περιουσίᾳ, καὶ σὺν θυγατρὶ καθαρωτάταις, πᾶν τὸ δαιμόνων ἐξόν ἀπελαύνειν ἡμῖν φίλον ὄντες, ἐπὶ ὁ ᾤνοῦ Λόγος, καὶ ἡ παρ' αὐτῆς διαδασκαλία πολὺ κρείττους τ' ἀρετῆς ταύτης δυνάμει πάντας ἡμᾶς ἀπειράσας, ἐχθροὺς τε δαιμόνων καὶ πολεμίους.

" Lactant. L. 4. Divin. Instit. c. 27. p. 225. Nunc satis est me de hujus signi potentia quantum valeat exponere. Quanto terrori sit demonibus hoc signum, sciet qui viderit, quotenus adjurati per Christum, de corporibus quæ obsederint

“ at present what is the Power of the Sign of  
 “ the Cross. To find how terrible it is to De-  
 “ vils, you need only see with what precipi-  
 “ tation they abandon those Bodies they pos-  
 “ sess’d, when we conjure them by the Name  
 “ of Christ: For as when He dwelt among Men,  
 “ He cast out all Devils by his Word, and re-  
 “ stor’d those to peace and tranquillity, who  
 “ were tormented by them: So now His follow-  
 “ ers cast out these unclean Spirits by the Invo-  
 “ cation of their Master’s Name, and by the  
 “ sign of His Passion. Of this ’tis easy to be  
 “ convinc’d; for when the Heathens sacrifice to  
 “ their Gods, if there be any one present whose  
 “ Forehead is mark’d with this Sign, the Sacri-  
 “ fices do not succeed, nor the false Prophets give  
 “ Answers. This has given frequent occasion *A Story related*  
 “ to bad Princes to persecute the Christians: *by him to the*  
 “ For some Christian Servants attending on their *same purpose.*  
 “ Masters in their Sacrifices, having made the  
 “ Sign of the Cross on their Foreheads, had put

runt fugiant; nam sicut ipse, cum inter homines ageret, uni-  
 versos dæmonas verbo fugabat, hominumq; mentes emotas,  
 & malis incurfibus furiatas in sensus pristinos reponebat;  
 ita nunc sectatores ejus eisdem spiritus inquinatos de homi-  
 nibus & nomine Magistri sui & signo Passionis excludunt.  
 Cujus rei non difficilis est probatio. Nam cum diis suis im-  
 molant, si assistat aliquis signatam frontem gerens, sacra  
 nullo modo litant.

Nec responsa potest consultus reddere vates.

Et hæc sæpe causa præcipua justitiam persequendi malis  
 regibus fuit. Cum enim quidam nostrorum sacrificantibus  
 Dominis assisterent, imposito frontibus signo, deos eorum  
 fugaverunt, ne possent in visceribus hostiarum futura depin-  
 gere. Quod cum intelligerent Aruspices, investigantibus  
 iisdem Dæmonibus quibus consecrarent, conquirentes pro-  
 fanos homines sacris interesse, adegerunt principes suos in  
 furorem, ut expurgarent Dei templum, seque vero sacrile-  
 gio contaminarent, quod gravissimis persequentium poenis  
 expiaretur.

“ their

“ their Gods to flight, and hindred them from  
 “ describing things to come in the Entrails of  
 “ the Sacrifices: Which the Southsayers having  
 “ learn’d from the Devils themselves, to whom  
 “ they were sacrificing, they complain’d that  
 “ profane Persons were present at their Sa-  
 “ crifices, and thereby put the Emperor in a  
 “ Rage; and in order to purifie their Temples,  
 “ urg’d them to defile themselves with a real  
 “ Sacrilege, that ought to have been expiated  
 “ with the Punishment of these Persecutors.

A like Story  
 related by Pru-  
 dentius.

*Prudentius* \* elegantly describes an Event of this kind, which happen’d when he was young, in the Presence of *Julian the Apostate*: That at the very time when he was sacrificing to his Demons, one of the Pages that waited on him being a Christian, did by his Presence and by the Sign of the Cross, hinder the success of his Sacrifices and magick Enchantments, confound his Southsayers and Enchanters, and make the Devils vanish, whom he had rais’d. By this the Emperor was convinc’d, what he already knew by his own experience, how terrible the Sign of the Cross was to those Devils, since he was forc’d to have recourse thereto himself before he was Emperor, to secure himself against that fear, which the sight of evil Spirits thus call’d up, had brought upon him. Both *Theodoret* † and *Gregory Nazianzen* ‡ attest this.

Julian the Apo-  
 stat convinc’d  
 by himself of  
 the Power of  
 the Sign of the  
 Cross over De-  
 vils.

*Pruden-*

\* Prudentius in Apotheosi. loco supra relato, pag. 92.

† Theodoric. L. 3. Hist. Eccles. cap. 3. loco supra relato Parte I. pag. 79.

‡ Gregor. Nazianz. Orat. 2. adv. Julian. p. 71. Ὁς ὅτι πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀποστασίαν ἀποβέβηκεν τὰ δαιμόνια, καὶ αὐτὸς πάλιν καὶ ἐκείνους — καὶ αὐτοὺς πάλιν — ἐπὶ τῇ σωτηρίᾳ κατέβαλεν, καὶ τὸ παλαιὸν φάρμακον, καὶ τὸ σημεῖον, καὶ τὸ ῥόδιον — ἔχουσιν ἢ (φάρμακον ἢ τὸ ῥόδιον) οἱ δαίμονες, λυόντες οἱ ῥόδια.

*Prudentius* also describes with his usual *What Prudentius says of the manner in which the Gods of the Heathens were expell'd by the Christians.*  
*beauty of Style, in what manner Apollo Jupiter and Mercury were tormented, and constrain'd to take their flight, when the Christians cast them out; and he produces this wonderful Power, which they had over the Demons and Gods of the Heathens, as an evident proof of the Truth of the Christian Religion.*

*Origen* affirms that the simplest among the *A Passage of Origen on the same Subject.*

ἴτα τί; ἀναπνεῖ τὸ κακόν, θεασαμένῳ πάλιν, αὐθις ἐρμή  
 καὶ οἱ αὐτοὶ φέβει, καὶ ἡ σφραγὶς ἀφ' ἧς, καὶ ἡρεμύτης οἱ  
 δαίμονες, καὶ ὁ μύσος αὐ, ἀπορία, καὶ ὁ μυσταγωγός ἐχθρὸς  
 παρρησιασμένης, καὶ ἀλήθειαν, ἐξ ἐχθρῶν χθονίων λέγων, ἐκ ἐρο-  
 σήσας, νικᾷ τὸ χεῖρον.

*Prudentius ibidi p. 176. l. 397.*

Si gens furda negat tibi tot praconia, de te  
 Audiat insipum bacchantis energima monstri,  
 Quod rabidus clamat capta inter viscera daemon,  
 Et credat misera sua. Torquetur Apollo  
 Nomine percussus Christi, nec fulmina verbi  
 Ferro potest: agitant miserum tot verbera linguae,  
 Quot laudata Dei resonant miracula Christi.  
 Intonat Antistes Domini: fuge callide serpens,  
 Exue te membris, & spiras solve latentes:  
 Mancipium Christi fur corruptissime vexas?  
 Desine, Christus adest humani corporis, ulcor:  
 Non licet ut spoliū, rapies, cui Christus inhæsit.  
 Pulsus abi ventoseli liquor, Christus jubet, exi.  
 Has inter voces medias Cyllenius ardens  
 Ejulat, & notos suspirat Jupiter ignes.

*Origenes, L. 7. contra Celsum. p. 334. Εἰδ' ἔτι καὶ*

καὶ ἐκ ἐν ἐαυτῷ δεῖν ἢ Πυθίᾳ, ὅτε μανθάνει. ποδαπὸν νο-  
 μιστὸν πνεῦμα, τὸ σκότον καὶ ἀχίαν τὸ νῦν, καὶ τὸ λογισμῶν,  
 ἢ τοῦτον ὁποῖον δεῖ καὶ τὰ τ' δαίμονων καὶ, καὶ ἐκ ὁλί-  
 γων χειρῶν ἀπ' αὐτῶν τ' παρόντων, (καὶ ἄντι πει-  
 ρῶν καὶ καλῶν ἢ φαρμακείᾳ πειρῶν), ἀλλὰ μόνον  
 οὐχ ἢ ὁρμῶσιν ἀπ' αὐτῶν, καὶ ὅσα ἐν δυνάμει πρὸς αὐ-  
 τῶν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀνθρώπων; ὡς σπῆται τὸ ἰδίῳ τὸ τοῦ-  
 τον πειρῶν, παρὰ δὲ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ χεῖρ καὶ χεῖρ  
 τὸ τ' δαίμονων ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ ἀδανές, ἢ πάντως δαίμονων πρὸς  
 τὸ ἡττηθῆναι, καὶ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐχθρῶν καὶ λογισμῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ  
 σώματι, (σοφὴ τινὲς καὶ δυνάμει ἐν τῷ λογισμῶν καὶ  
 πείρας ἀποδοῦναι).

“Christi-

Christians had this Power. " But if the Priest-  
 " efs *Pythia*, says he, is besides her self when  
 " she delivers Oracles, what must we think of  
 " the Spirit that disturbs her Reason? Is it not  
 " like that sort of Devils, which a great many  
 " Christians cast out of the Bodies of the pos-  
 " sessed, without having recourse to Magick or  
 " Inchantments, but only by Prayers and the  
 " most simple Exorcisms, such as Persons of the  
 " meanest capacity may practice? For very of-  
 " ten they are the most ignorant among the  
 " Christians, who cast out Devils by their  
 " Words, accompany'd with the Grace of  
 " Christ, which shews how weak the Devils  
 " are, since there is no need of Persons of learn-  
 " ing and skill in the demonstrations of Faith,  
 " to cast them out of the Bodies and Souls  
 " which they possess. He alledges this very  
 " Power of the Christians, in many other places  
 " of his excellent Book against *Celsus*, to confute  
 " this Heathen, and convince him of the truth  
 " of our Religion.

One of Tertul-  
 lian.

" We have not only an abhorrence of Devils,  
 " (says *Tertullian* \* to the President *Scapula*)  
 " but we also combat with them, we put them  
 " to confusion and daily cast them out, as many

\* Idem. L. i. p. 7, 20, 53. & L. vii. p. 376.

\* Tertullian L. ad Scapulam. c. 2. p. 69. Dæmones au-  
 tem non tantum respuimus, verum & revincimus & quotidie  
 traducimus & de hominibus expellimus, sicut plurimis no-  
 tum est, & c. 4. p. 71. Hæc omnia tibi & de officio suggeri  
 possunt, & ab eisdem Advocatis, qui & ipsi beneficia habent  
 Christianorum; licet adclament quæ volunt. Nam & ejus-  
 dam notarius, cum à Dæmone præcipitaretur, liberatus est:  
 & quorundam propinquus & puerulus. Et quanti honesti  
 viri (de vulgaribus enim non dicimus) aut à Dæmoniis, aut  
 valerudinibus remediati sunt?

“ of you know. Your very Officers might acquaint you with it, having themselves receiv’d Favours of this kind from the Christians, however they cry out against us. For the Secretary of one of them was by this means deliver’d from the Devil that tormented him, as also was the Kinsman of another, and the Son of a third: And how many considerable Persons among you (to say nothing of the meaner sort) have been thus dispossefs’d of Devils, or heal’d of Diseases?

“ You may be sensible of the Truth of what I say (says *Justin Martyr* to the Roman Senate in his first *Apology*) by what happens every day in your own sight: For many of us Christians have cur’d, and still do cure several, who are possess’d with the Devil, all over the World and particularly in your own City, whom no Enchanters nor Magicians could deliver, by only adjuring the evil Spirits that possess’d them, by the Name of Jesus Christ who was crucified under *Pontius Pilate*, thereby disabling and casting them out. And in his *Dialogue* with the Jew Tryphon,

\* Justinus Apolog. I. p. 45. Καὶ νῦν ἐν τῷ ὄπῳ ὅτι ἡμεῖς μαθεῖν δυνάμεθα· δαιμονολήπτης γὰρ πολλὰς καὶ πάντα τὸ κόσμον, καὶ ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ πόλει, πολλοὶ τῶν ἐμμετέρων ἀνθρώπων τῇ χειριστῶν ἐπορκίζοντες καὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ τῇ σωρωθέντες ἐπὶ Ποντίῳ Πιλάτῃ, ὡς καὶ ἄλλων πάντων ἐπορκιστῶν, καὶ ἐπαστῶν, καὶ φαρμακιδῶν μὴ μαθόντας, ἰδούσας, καὶ ἐτι νῦν ἰώντες, καθαρῶντες καὶ ἐπορκίζοντες τοὺς κατέχοντας τοὺς ἀνθρώπους δαίμονας.

\* Idem. Dial. cum Tryphone. p. 247. Βοηθὸν γὰρ ἐκείνων καὶ λυσιπύλῳ καλέμεθα, καὶ καὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια τρέμεται, καὶ σήμερον ἔχομεν ἡμεῖς καὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ τῇ σωρωθέντες ἐπὶ Ποντίῳ Πιλάτῃ τῷ ἡμεῖς ἐπὶ τῇ ἰσχυρίᾳ, ὡς ἔειπες. Et infra. p. 302. Καὶ νῦν ἡμεῖς οἱ πιστεύοντες ἐπὶ τῇ σωρωθέντες ἐπὶ Ποντίῳ Πιλάτῃ Ἰησοῦν κύριον ἡμῶν, τὰ δαιμόνια πάντα καὶ πᾶσι μάλᾳ πονηρὰ ἐπορκίζοντες, ὡς ἡμεῖς ἡμῖν ἐχθροὺς.

“ We

“ We call Christ our Helper and Redeemer,  
 “ says this Father, The Devils tremble at his  
 “ Name, and at this day, when adjur’d by the  
 “ Name of *Jesus Christ* who was crucify’d under  
 “ *Pontius Pilate* Governour of *Judaea*, they sub-  
 “ mit and obey us.

CHAP. VII. The Author of the *Questions upon the Old and A Passage out New Testament*, who appears more antient than of an antient St. *Augustin*, among whose Works we find this Author concerning the Power of the Cross over the Gods of the Heathens and their Oracles.

Book, having said that Miracles were no longer necessary, as they had been at the beginning of the Establishment of the Christian Religion, adds these Words <sup>b</sup> “ Yet even at this time the  
 “ Devils are terrify’d at the bare naming of the  
 “ Cross of Christ, and if they are press’d with  
 “ it, they are forc’d to take their flight: Nei-  
 “ ther can the Gods of the Heathens give An-  
 “ swers, by reason of that dread they have of  
 “ this Cross—— If the Devils, continues he,  
 “ or the Gods of the Heathens were not sensi-  
 “ ble, that the Cross of Christ is a great Myste-  
 “ ry, they would not be frightned when ’tis  
 “ nam’d: And to speak yet more expressly, if  
 “ they were not conscious of their own guilt,  
 “ they would not be afraid of his Cross: For  
 “ all those that take part with the Devil, have

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<sup>b</sup> Autor. L. de Quæst. Vet. Testam. apud S. August. Q. 114. p. 592. Tamen & modo Dæmonia nominatâ cruce Christi terrentur, & si impensius fiat, fugantur. Et Dii Paganorum formidine & metu nominatæ crucis responsa dare non possunt — Itaq; nisi sentirent Dæmonia vel Dii Paganorum sacramento esse crucem Christi, nominatâ eâ non terrentur, & ut expressius dicam, nisi rei essent, non time-  
 rent. Hi etenim omnes, qui ex parte Diaboli sunt, consenserunt in mortem Christi: unde cuncta Dæmonia sive Dii Gentium, nominatâ cruce Christi terrore concutiantur.

“ consented to the Death of our Saviour ; and  
 “ it is for this reason, that all the Devils or  
 “ Gods of the *Gentiles*, tremble at the bare  
 “ Name of his Cross. He had said a little be-  
 fore<sup>1</sup>, “ That at the appearance of the Sign of  
 “ the Cross, *Paganism* is struck dumb, their  
 “ Gods dare give no more Answers, nor de-  
 “ scribe any thing in the Entrails of the Sacrifi-  
 “ ces, but remain speechless and hide them-  
 “ selves ; with so much awe and veneration did  
 “ the Majesty of the Christian Religion inspire  
 “ them. He adds, It is astonishing that all  
 “ *Paganism* which they call Wisdom, should be  
 “ so much afraid of Christianity which they  
 “ esteem as foolishness.

“ Among us, says *Irenæus*<sup>2</sup>, there are some *One of Irenæus.*  
 “ who certainly and infallibly cast out Devils,  
 “ and that in such a manner, that those who  
 “ are deliver’d from them are very often con-  
 “ verted, and embrace the Christian Faith.

“ It has often happen’d, says *Gregory Nazianzen*<sup>3</sup> of Gregory  
 Nazianzen.

<sup>1</sup> Idem ibid. p. 590. Præsentæ signo crucis obmutescit Pa-  
 ganitas. Et si adest, quam vocant stultam, prudentia illa,  
 sacra illorum respondere non audent: reprimuntur enim exta  
 illorum, respondere non audent, & occultantur ob reverenti-  
 am Christianæ Majestatis. Magna res est, ut illa quam vo-  
 cant prudentiam, metuat illam quam appellant stultitiam.

<sup>2</sup> *Irenæus* L. ii. advers. Hæreses, c. 57. Quapropter & in  
 illius nomine qui verè illius sunt Discipuli, ab ipso accipien-  
 tes gratiam, perficiunt ad beneficia reliquorum hominum,  
 quemadmodum unus quisq; accepit donum ab eo. Alii enim  
 demones excludunt firmissimè & verè, ut etiam sæpissimè  
 credant ipsi qui emundati sunt à nequissimis spiritibus, &  
 sunt in Ecclesiâ — Non est numerum dicere gratiarum,  
 quas per universum mundum Ecclesiâ à Deo accipiens, in  
 nominæ Christi Jesu crucifixi sub Pontio Pilato per singulos  
 dies in opulationem gentium perficit. Is *Irenæi* locus re-  
 fertur græcè ab Eutobio. L. v. Hist. Eccles. c. 7.

“ anzen<sup>1</sup>, to me my self who am one of Christ's  
 “ Disciples, that I have hardly pronounc'd this  
 “ venerable Name, but the Devil took flight,  
 “ murmuring and raging for Grief, loudly  
 “ proclaiming the Power of God over him.  
 “ The same thing has come to pass, when I  
 “ only made the Sign of the Cross in the Air.  
 “ We invoke Christ crucify'd, (says St. Athanasius<sup>m</sup>, or rather St. Anthony speaking to the  
 Heathen Philosophers, that were come to see  
 him in his solitude) “ and presently the De-  
 “ vils fly away, whom you adore as Gods.  
 “ And wherever the Sign of the Cross is made,  
 “ Magick has no force, Inchantments remain  
 “ without Effect: Where now are your Oracles?

Of St. Athanasius in the  
 Life of St. Anthony.

<sup>1</sup> Gregor. Nazianz. Carmine ad Nemesium. Tom. 2.

P. 142.

Οὐ μέλα, καὶ γὰρ ἐξ ὧν χειρὶ λάχῃ. ἔνομα λειπὸν  
 Πολλὰ καὶ μὲν ἔειπον. ὅδ' ὅχελος τηλὸς δαίμων,  
 Τρύζων ἀγαλῶντε, βοῶν δένει ὑψιμέδοντι  
 Ἡ σαυρὺ μασάλοιο. χαρὰς μάλισι, μὴδὲ μύνοις

<sup>m</sup> Hieron. μέσων ἑσχαλῶν, τυπῶ δ' ἔκτισε τέλειον.

<sup>m</sup> Athanasius in vitâ S. Antonii. p. 495. Ἡμεῖς ὅντο  
 μάζοντες ἢ ἐσαυρωμένον χειρὶν, πάντας δυνάμεις δαί-  
 μονας, ἃς ὑμεῖς φοβεῖσθε ὡς θεούς· καὶ ἐνθα τὸ (ἡμεῖον ἢ  
 σαυρὺ γίνεσθαι, ἀδενεῖ μὲν μάσεια, ἐκ ἐνερσίῃ ἢ φαρμακίᾳ·  
 εἴπατε γὰρ, πῶς νυνὶ ὑμεῖς τὰ μαντεῖα; πῶς αἱ ἢ Αἰσυν-  
 τῶν ἐπσοῖσαι; πῶς ἢ μάσων αἱ φαντασίαι; πότε ταῦτα  
 πάντα πέπαι; καὶ ἡδένησαν, εἰ μὴ ὅτε ὁ ἢ Χριστὸς σαυρὺς γέ-  
 λονεν. Et p. 469. id. παρέσιν ὧδε παρχοῖς καὶ δαίμονων  
 ἢ ὑμεῖς τοῖς συλλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν καὶ ἢ ἀν βλήθετε τέχνη  
 ἢ μάσεια, ὅπκαλέμενοι τὰ εἰδωλα ἑαυτῶν, καθαρὰ ἑαλε  
 αὐτῆς· ἢ, εἰ μὴ δυνάσθε, καθαρὰ ἑαλε ἢ περὶ ἡμᾶς μάχην,  
 καὶ ὅφειδε ἢ σαυρὺ ἢ χειρὶ ἢ δυνάμειν· καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν  
 ἐπεκαλέσασθαι ἢ Χριστὸν, ἐσφράσισέ τε πᾶν παρχοῖας πᾶν  
 (ἡμεῖον σαυρὺ δαίτερον καὶ τέτον, καὶ ἐνθὺς ἐσηῖ οἱ ἀν-  
 θρωποι δολοκλήτοι φαρμακῶντες καὶ συχαεῖς τε πᾶν Κυνεῖον  
 λοιπόν· καὶ οἱ μὲν λεγόμενοι φιλόσοφοι ἐθαύμαζον καὶ ἀληθῶς  
 ἐπλήττοιο ὅτι τῇ ζωῇ ἢ ἀνδρὸς καὶ πᾶν ἡμεῖον  
 (ἡμεῖον.

" Where are the Enchantments of the *Egypti-*  
 " *ans* ? Where are all the Illusions of the Magi-  
 " cians ? When did all this cease, but since the  
 " Cross of Christ appear'd ? A little after, to  
 conclude his discourse with a sensible Proof, he  
 adds : " Behold Persons possess'd with Devils :  
 " make your utmost Efforts, employ your Ma-  
 " gick, and call upon your Idols to deliver them.  
 " If you are not able to effect it, yield to us, and  
 " you shall see the Power of the Cross of Christ.  
 " Having said this he call'd upon Christ, and  
 " signed the possessed three times with the Sign  
 " of the Cross, who immediately thereupon  
 " were perfectly cur'd, to the great Astonish-  
 " ment (says St. *Athanasius*) of those Philoso-  
 " phers, who admir'd both the Wisdom of the  
 " Saint, and the Miracle he had wrought.

You know, Sir, without doubt what Power *A Story of*  
 St. *Gregory Thaumaturgus* " had over Devils : *St. Gregory of*  
 You *Neocæsarea,*  
*related by Gre-*  
*gory Nyssen*  
*and Rufinus,*  
*concerning the*  
*Power of the*  
*Christians over*  
*Devils.*

" *Gregorius Nyssenus in vitâ S. Gregorii Thaumaturgi.*  
 p. 548, &c. & *Rufinus L. 7. Hist. Eccles. Euseb. cap. 25. p. 172.*  
 173. Cujus hæc sunt verba : Iter ei fuisse quondam per Al-  
 pes dicitur hyemis tempore, & cum pervenisset ad summum  
 Alpium jugum, nivibus repleta erant omnia, nullum usquam  
 diversorium. Phanum ibi tantum Apollinis erat, cui succe-  
 dens transactâ nocte discessit. Sacerdos verò erat quidam  
 ejus Phani, cui consulere simulacrum Apollinis mos erat, &  
 reddere responsa poscentibus, ex quo ei etiam alimonia  
 quaestus esse videbatur. Igitur post digestum Gregorii  
 offerre consulta, & responsa poscere Sacerdos accessit ex  
 more, nihil inde responsi veniebat. Repetit victimas, silen-  
 tium permanet. Iterum atq; iterum litat, surdis ingerit fa-  
 bulam. Cumq; stupore novi silentii æstualet sacerdos, nocte  
 ei assistens Dæmonium, dicit in somnis : Quid me illic in-  
 vocas, quò jam venire non possum ? Percontanti causam,  
 adventu se Gregorii dicebat expulsum. Quid nunc remedi-  
 daretur cum perquireret, ait, non aliter sibi licere ingredi  
 locum illum, nisi Gregorius permisisset. Quibus auditis,  
 sacerdos occupat viam, multa apud semetipsum volvens, atq;

You might have read in your Author, that this Saint once entering into a Temple, where *Apollo* deliver'd Oracles, drove this false God out from thence by the Sign of the Cross, and the Invocation of the Name of Jesus; insomuch that when the Priest of *Apollo* would have consulted him the Day after, according to his usual Custom, he receiv'd no Inspiration from him, but found himself absolutely destitute of his Prophetick Vertue: He repeats his Sacrifices, redoubles his Enchantments, displays all the Secrets of his Art. At last the *Demon* appear'd and told him, that he could not dwell in his Temple any more, because of the Person who had lain there the Night before. The Priest immediately runs after the Holy Bishop, and begs he would restore his Oracle. The Saint without delay writes to

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animo recursante pertractans, pervenit ad Gregorium, adoratusque cum, rem pandit ex ordine, humanitatis suæ atque hospitalitatis admonuit, querelam depulsi numinis promittit, ademptam facultatem sui questus deplorat, ac reddi sibi omnia in pristinum statum deposcit. At ille nihil moratus scribit epistolam in hæc verba: GREGORIUS APOLLINI. Permitto tibi redire ad locum tuum, & agere quæ consuevist. Hanc epistolam sacerdos accipit & ad Phanum deferret: positaque eâ juxta simulacrum, affuit Dæmon & dedit responsa poscenti. Tum ille in semetipsum conversus ait: Si Gregorius jussit, & Deus iste discessit nec potuit redire nisi jussus, & rursus jubente Gregorio restitutus est, quomodo non multo melior iste Gregorius cujus hic obtemperat jussis? Clausis igitur januis Phani descendit ad Gregorium, epistolam secum quam acceperat deferens, omnemque apud eum rei gestæ ordinem pandens: Simulque se ad pedes ejus prosternens rogat ut illi se Deo offerat, cujus virtute Diis Gentium Gregorius imperabat. Cùmque enixius & pertinacius persisteret, catechumenus ab eo factus est, &c.

In the Relation which Gregory Nyssen makes of this Story, there are some different Circumstances, but which make no alteration in the main: Among others he gives this account of St. Gregory's Letter. Gregory to Satan; enter. p. 549.

*Apollo*

*Apollo* in these Terms. *Gregory* to *Apollo*: Re-  
enter. The *Demon* obeys, and the Priest being  
thereby convinc'd what Power *St. Gregory* had  
over his Gods, forsook them and became a  
Christian. I know your *Anabaptist* Physician  
only laughs at this Story; neither am I sur-  
priz'd at it. It could not but displease him  
upon more accounts than one. But whatever  
he says of it, he may allow you and me to have  
a little more regard for the Authority of *Gre-  
gory Nyssen*, and *Ruffinus* who relate it, than for  
his, which you ought now more than ever to  
look upon as very defective and uncertain.

Besides, I do not doubt but you are perfectly *This Power al-*  
well acquainted, that this wonderful Power of *ways has, and*  
the Name and Invocation of *Jesus Christ* over *always will*  
Devils, always has and always will subsist in *subsis in the*  
the Church, and that it continues therein even *Church; 'tis a*  
at present: All which it would be very easy for *Mark whereb*  
me to shew you from the Testimony of Scrip- *she is distin-*  
ture, and that of all Ages, and from what still *guish'd from all*  
happens every Day, particularly in idolatrous *Sects of Here-*  
Countries, where *Jesus Christ* is preach'd. That *sicks.*  
is one of the most sensible proofs of the Truth  
of our Religion against all Sects of Hereticks,  
who notwithstanding their utmost Efforts, have  
not been able with any Success so much as to  
counterfelt this Evidence. But I am afraid I  
should trespass upon your Patience, in detain-  
ing you longer on this Subject, tho' very useful  
and important.

I conclude therefore from what I have said; *Conclusions*  
*First*, That the Fathers did not believe, as you *drawn from all*  
have suppos'd they did, that all Oracles ceas'd *the Passages of*  
precisely at the Birth of Christ; but that this *the Fathers a-*  
happen'd afterwards by degrees, as Christ was *gainst the Opi-*  
known of Men, and his Religion establish'd in *nion of Mr. De*  
the World. *Secondly*, That nothing is more *Fontenelle.*  
indubi-

indubitable than that Oracles did thus cease, seeing it is attested not only by the Fathers, but by the Heathens themselves. *Thirdly*, That this silence to which Oracles were reduc'd, was a miraculous effect both of the Power of Christ himself, and of that which he gave to his Disciples and to his Church, over Devils. This being so, it will be no hard matter for me to confute all that you advance in your second Dissertation, to destroy a Truth so glorious to our Saviour, and so honourable to the Christian Religion.

CHAP. VIII. You say first, That \* *what has made most Men* What convinc'd *believe that Oracles ceas'd at the Birth of Christ,* the Fathers of *were those Oracles themselves which were deliver'd* the silence of *upon the silence of Oracles.* In my Opinion, Sir, the Christians *what persuaded the Primitive Christians and* who came after *the Fathers that Oracles had ceas'd since the* them. *Incarnation of the Son of God was, that they*

*saw this wondrous Event with their own Eyes: What need had they of other Proofs? They liv'd at the very time when Oracles fell to decay: They themselves put them to silence by the Sign of the Cross, and the Invocation of the Name of Jesus. They heard the Heathens complain of this silence, at which they were so much surpriz'd; and inquire after the cause of it. They were not ignorant that some of them own'd, that it proceeded from Christ's being acknowledg'd and ador'd in the World. This Concession of their Enemies confirm'd them in their Opinion: This is what persuaded and convinc'd them of this Truth in such a manner, that they could not doubt of it one Mo-*

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\* Hist. Diss. 2. ch. 1. p. 220.

ment. As for those Christians who came after them, and for us who also believe this Wonder, we assent to it on the Testimony of those Eye-witnesses, of those very Men whom God made use of to effect it; Men of whose Capacity as well as Holiness we are otherwise convinc'd. It is true after the Example of these great Men, we use likewise the Testimony of *Porphyry*, and of other Heathens that have been forc'd to own this Truth: And why should we not make an advantage of the Concession of our greatest Enemies? Next to the Testimony of Eye and Ear-witnesses, is there any other more certain, and less to be suspected?

But 'tis the Devil according to our Opinion, *The Devil is that deliver'd the Oracle which Porphyry relates, often forc'd to bear witness to the Truth.* First, We do not rely wholly upon this Oracle: we have a great number of other Authorities, and that of *Porphyry* himself, who speaks of his own Head in the Passage which I have cited from him after *Eusebius*. Secondly, What matter is it that this Oracle of which you speak, was deliver'd by the Devil? Was that the first time that he has been oblig'd to bear Witness to the Truth? Did not he do it with respect to Christ<sup>e</sup> and the Apostles<sup>p</sup>? Did he not

\* Mark i. 23, 24, 25, 26. *And there was in their Synagogue a Man with an unclean Spirit; and he cried out, saying; let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth: art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the holy one of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean Spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.*

† Act. xvi. 16, 17. *And it came to pass, as we went to Prayer, a certain damsel possess'd with a Spirit of Divination, met us: which brought her Masters much gain by sooth-saying. The same follow'd Paul and us, and cried, saying, these Men are the Servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of Salvation, &c.*

own to St. Anthony, as St. Athanasius<sup>1</sup> relates, that he was forc'd to abandon all the Places and Cities of which he had possess'd himself, because they were full of Christians? To which the Saint reply'd: "I do not believe what thou sayest, as if thou wert worthy of belief, but because it is the Truth which thou art forc'd to own, tho' thou beest the Father of Lies: For it is true, that Christ has destroy'd thy Strength, and overthrow'n thy Empire. This is what this great Saint did, and what we still do answer to the Devil, who deliver'd the Oracle of which you speak.

Yet he is wont  
to join Falshood  
with it.

The Devil does therefore sometimes speak the Truth against his will: But you may observe, that in this very Oracle he does not wholly forget what he is. He joyns Falshood with Truth in this, as he was wont to do in most of the rest, according to the observation of St. Cyprian<sup>2</sup> and Minutius Felix<sup>3</sup>. He owns that most of the Oracles were dumb: This was Truth, too evident to be deny'd: But then he adds, that this proceeded from the failure of Exhalations, and the different changes which happen'd in the Earth. This was Falshood. He says likewise that there were three Oracles still subsisting. If there be any passage in all

<sup>1</sup> Athanas. in vita S. Antonii. p. 476. Οὐκ ἐτι τόπον ἔχω, ἢ Βέλθ, ἢ πόλιν· πανταχὺ χριστιανοὶ γεγόνασι· λοιπὸν καὶ ἡ ἐρημία πεπληρώθη μοναχῶν — τότε θαυμάσας ἐξῆλθ' κυεῖν τὴν χάναν, ἔπαυεν περὶ αὐτὸν· αἰεὶ ἰδύσσης αὐν, καὶ μηδέποτε λείπον ἀληθεῖαν, ἀμὼς πάντοτε νῦν καὶ μετέπειτα, καὶ κατὰ βολὰν ἐξήμνησαν.

<sup>2</sup> Cyprian. L. de Idolol. Vanit. p. 14. Oracula efficiunt, falsa veris semper involvunt.

<sup>3</sup> Minutius Felix in Octavio p. 248. Oracula efficiunt falsis pluribus involuta.

his Answer, which ought to be suspected, it is this. We must not imagine he would own a Truth so prejudicial to his Interests, as that of the silence of Oracles, without adding some restriction thereto, which might take off from the Shame of it. Yet it is upon this restriction so much to be suspected, that you think him particularly worthy of belief. You improve it very much: You make use of it, as an evident and incontestable Argument against the Opinion, which you ascribe to *Eusebius*; without considering that the same Reproach may be made to you, which you make to others, of having forgot that it is the Devil that speaks, or at least a Cheat and an Impostor, who deserves belief no more than he.

Let us see however what you conclude from the Exception of these three Oracles. You accuse *Eusebius* of not having perceived, that it destroyed his Opinion, or if he perceiv'd it, say you, \* perhaps he believ'd this Exception was nothing, and that it was sufficient that most Oracles were ceas'd. But, you add, this is not so. If Oracles were deliver'd by Devils, whom the Birth of Christ condemn'd to silence; no Devil had more privilege than other. If there were left so much as one Oracle after Christ, I need no more. It was not his Birth, which silenc'd Oracles. This is one of those cases, where the least Exception destroys the general Proposition.

*Eusebius* never said, that the Birth of Christ condemn'd the Devils to silence, in that sense which you give to this Proposition, as I think I have prov'd very clearly. But he said that Oracles ceas'd after the Birth of Christ, after

*Eusebius unjustly accus'd of not having consider'd the sense of an Oracle which he cites.*

*He never said, that Oracles ceas'd all at once at the moment of Christ's Birth.*

\* Hist. ibid. p. 223, 224.

his Gospel was publish'd, after that Men own'd and embrac'd it. He attributed this miraculous Cessation to the Power which our Saviour had, and which he gave his Disciples, to preach his Gospel, and establish his Religion upon the ruins of Paganism, in spite of all the Oppositions of the World and the Devil, But as Christianity was not establish'd all at once in every part of the Universe: So Oracles and all the other superstitions of Idolatry did not cease in all places at the same time. There are Countries even at this day, where Idolaters consult the Devil almost in the same manner, as the *Greeks* and *Romans* did in their Oracles before the Birth of Christ. Yet notwithstanding this Exception do not we, and do not you your self say, that Oracles are now ceas'd; because most of them were indeed long since abolish'd? And we do not doubt, but when the Christian Faith shall be establish'd in those Idolatrous Countries of which we speak, their Oracles will become dumb as well as all the rest, and the Devils be cast out of them, as they have been every where else, and still are daily by the Power of Christ, the Invocation of his Name, and the glorious Sign of his Passion. Thus *Eusebius* had reason not to trouble himself at this Exception, which you object to him: Because it is so far from overthrowing his Opinion, as you pretend it does, that it declares, establishes and confirms it; and shews clearly how much you are in the wrong, to ascribe a different Opinion to him.

*The Oracle which he cites is so far from overthrowing his Opinion that it shews it, and perfectly confirms it.*

CHAP. IX. You speak next of the Treatise of *Plutarch* Of the Treatise concerning the Cessation of Oracles. You say \* *that many upon this Title alone have fram'd their*

\* Hist. ibid. p. 225.

*Opinion and taken party.* 'Tis-rather, Sir, by *authentick* the Book it self, which answers perfectly well *Proof of what* to its Title, that all those who have a little *the Fathers taught upon* reading and good sense, have been entirely con- *this Subject.* firm'd in the general Opinion of all Christians, that Oracles ceas'd after the Birth of Christ: And can we have a more convincing Proof of what the Fathers teach us upon this Subject, than that Book of this Philosopher? The rest of the Heathens only spoke occasionally, and in very few Words concerning this Event, which surpriz'd them all: But this Author writes a particular Treatise wholly upon this Subject. He inquires diligently into the causes of this silence, and we see how much he is perplex'd to find out any, that have some probability, and may be able to satisfy him. Is it not a wonderful thing, that about a hundred Years *We find there,* after the Death of Christ, the greatest part of *that most Ora-* that multitude of Oracles then in the World *cles ceas'd a-* did now give no more Answers, as even this *bout 100 Years* Philosopher acknowledges, who was a passio- *after the Birth* of Christ. nate Admirer of them; tho' the Temples where they were deliver'd did still subsist in all their glory? Is it possible herein to be insensible of his Power, who came upon Earth to overthrow the Empire of the Devil, and destroy all his Works? This is what we find in the Treatise of *Plutarch*, and the learned have reason to refer the incredulous thither, to convince them by the Testimony of this Heathen, of that which they will not believe upon the Authority of the Fathers. Whatever you may say to the contrary, as long as this Book subsists, it will be a Monument and an irrefragable Proof of the silence of Oracles after the Birth of Christ.

Next

Oracles were  
still deliver'd  
at Delphos in  
Cicero's time.

Next you dispute against that Author concerning a passage of *Cicero* \*, which he means of Oracles that were deliver'd in Verse. At first you pretend it is to be understood of all sorts of Oracles, as well in Verse as in Prose. But after this fruitless Effort you are oblig'd to submit to his Opinion. It is true the Oracle of *Delphos* still gave Answers in *Cicero's* time. There are a great many Proofs \* of it. Nor indeed had our Saviour yet appear'd: He had not yet discover'd his Power by the miraculous Establishment of his Church. Before the Birth of Christ, as *Eusebius* observes †, Oracles were never dumb, as they have been since, to the great astonishment of the Heathen.

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\* This is the Passage in question, taken out of his second Book de Divinatione. p. 4896. Sed quod caput est, cur isto modo jam oracula Delphis non eduntur, non modo nostrâ ætate, sed jam diu, jam ut nihil possit esse contemptius? Cicero had just before cited Oracles deliver'd in Verse to *Cræsus* and to *Pyrrhus*; and 'tis of such sort of Oracles as were deliver'd in Verse, that he speaks when he says, there were no more deliver'd in that manner: isto modo, and that of a long time, jam diu, which relates to what he had said: That from the time of *Pyrrhus*, *Apollo* had left off delivering Oracles in Verse. Præterea *Pyrrhi* temporibus jam *Apollo* versus facere desierat. What he says afterwards does farther shew the same thing. Besides *Plutarch* answers this objection of *Cicero*, shewing by several instances which he produces in his Book written on this Subject, that in all times the Oracle of *Delphos* often answer'd in Prose, and that in his time it still answer'd sometimes in Verse.

† As that which *Cicero* makes his Brother *Quintus* say in his first Book de Divinatione p. 4817. That the Oracle of *Delphos* was then less famous, because the Truth of its Answers had less Reputation: Which supposes that this Oracle still gave Responses. The Example of *Cicero* himself, who receiv'd an answer from this Oracle, as *Plutarch* relates. That of *Appian*, who consulted the same Oracle during the War of *Pharsalia*, &c.

‡ *Eusebius* L. v. Præp. Evang. c. 17. & L. v. Dem. Evang. c. 1. locis supra descriptis p. 163, 164.

Yet

Yet you cannot persuade your self to own this Truth, which even the Heathens acknowledged; and under pretence of reconciling them with one another, you say that the silence of Oracles mention'd by them might come from some accident, that had ruin'd their Temples; on which you relate what *Plutarch* says \*, *That in old time a Dragon light upon Parnassus, and drove the Oracle from Delphos.* You add, that this Oracle † *was afterwards plunder'd by a Robber that came down from Phlegyas, by the Army of Xerxes, by the Phoceans, by Pyrrhus, by Nero, and lastly by the Christians under Constantine.* Thereby you shew clearly enough, that the same thing might well have happen'd in the time, that the Heathens say their Oracles were put to silence; and that by consequence it ought to be imputed only to the destruction of the Temples and Cities, where these Oracles were formerly deliver'd. The Explication is ingenious, but if it were true, the Heathens in my Opinion were much in the wrong to be surpriz'd at this silence. Is it any wonder that there should be no longer Oracles, where there were neither Cities nor Temples, and where all was desert and laid waste? Why should they go so far to search for the Reasons of this silence, and that too with such care and anxiety, when they had so evident and palpable a Reason of it before their Eyes? Why does *Plutarch* impute this, sometimes to the Gods, sometimes to the *Demons*, and sometimes to the fallure of the Exhalations of the Earth, as *Porphyry* and *Julian* the *Apostate* did after him, and never to the

*The Falshood of a Conjecture brought by the Author of the History to explain the silence of Oracles.*

\* Hist. Diss. 2. c. 2. p. 236.

† Hist. ibid. p. 237.

ruin of the Temples, and the spoils of War? Would he ever have thought fit to compose a Philosophick Treatise concerning the Cessation of Oracles, if they had been silenc'd only by some such accident? Would the Christians ever have had the boldness to reproach the Heathens with this silence, and to make use of it as an evident Proof of the weakness of their Deities, and of the Divine Power of Christ? But where are the Authors that say, these accidents happen'd after our Saviour's Birth to most of the Temples, where Oracles were deliver'd? Who were they that plunder'd and sack'd them at that time? Will you say they were the Christians, who were so far from being in a condition to overthrow the Temples of Idols, that they could hardly preserve their own Lives from the rage of their Persecutors?

*In what condition the Temples were in which Oracles were deliver'd, even in Plutarch's time.*

But not to lose time in refuting so false and chimerical an Imagination as this, do not you own, Sir \*, that in Plutarch's time the Temple of Delphos \* was more magnificent than ever? That some parts of the ancient Building which Time began to ruin, were repair'd, and others added entirely new? That there was even a little City built near it by degrees, which drew its nourishment from it, as a little Tree from a great one? And that this little City was then become more conside-

\* Hist. Diff. 2. c. I. p. 226, 227.

\* Plutarchus. L. de Pythiæ Oraculis sub finem. p. 727.

Ὁρᾷτε δὴ πῶθεν αὐτοὶ πολλὰ μὲν ἐπεκρίσματα τῶν πρῶτον ἐκ ὧν, πολλὰ δὲ ἀνελήμμεθα τῶν συσκευασμένων καὶ διασφαλισμένων· ὡς δὲ τοῖς ἐυδαίεσι τῶν δένδρων ἑτέρα φύλλα σπασάντι, καὶ τοῖς ἀγροῖς ἡ φυλαία συνῆα, καὶ συναναβόσκει· διὰ τὰς ἐνέειναι εὐπορίας, γῆμα λαμβάνουσα καὶ μορφῇ καὶ κόσμον ἑρῶν καὶ συνδεμένων καὶ ὑδάτων, οἷς ἐκ χιλίοις ἔτεσι τοῖς πρῶτον ἐκ ἐλαβεν

*nable, than it had been for a thousand Years past?*

By that then we may judge of the condition, in which Temples where Oracles were deliver'd, then were; and at the same time make an estimate how invalid that Conjecture is, which you bring here to explain the silence of Oracles.

Next you give us the History of the Duration of the Oracle of *Delphos*, and of some others. CHAP. X.  
 You carry that of *Delphos* as far as *Julian the Apostat*; and that of the God of *Heliopolis* unto the time of *Arcadius* and *Honorius*. Grant this Supputation of yours to be just: What does this make against the Opinion of the Fathers, when we understand it, and know that they did not assign the time of our Saviour's Birth for the precise Moment of the universal silence of Oracles: But only for the beginning of that decay and ruine, into which they afterwards fell? It is sufficient to make good their Opinion, that Oracles ceas'd after Christ was known of Men, and in proportion as his Religion was establish'd in the World: Now this is indubitable, and what you your self are oblig'd to own, what time soever you may assign for their duration.

However let us examine the Authorities of which you make use, to prove the long continuance of Oracles after the Birth of Christ. They seem to me to be none of the best chosen: For instance that of *Philostrophus* in the Life of *Apollo of Tyanaus*, where we know this Hea- then Author, in order to eclipse the glory of our Saviour, and the brightness of his Miracles, made no difficulty to invent the most ridiculous Fables, and employ the most notorious Fals- hoods. Are not you your self sensible, that in what he says of *Apollo of Delphos* there might

probably be some malice against the Christians? Is it then from such a Man, and in a Book of that nature, that we are to expect a sincere account of the silence of Oracles? A matter so shameful and prejudicial to Paganism, so glorious to Christ, and so advantageous to his Religion.

The Authority of the Priest of *Tyana* is no better, who asks the Impostor *Alexander*, whether the Oracles of *Didyma*, of *Claros*, and of *Delfos* are true: To whom the Impostor, not daring to answer him on this Subject, replies, that it is not permitted to him to know that. If there had been any Oracles still deliver'd, of what nature soever they had been, would he have made any scruple of saying it, and of owning them for true, in order to advance the Credit of those, which he father'd upon his *Æsculapius*?

It is true, *Julian* the *Apostate* receiv'd Answers from the Oracle of *Delfos*, which he us'd his utmost endeavour to restore. But is it any wonder, when he made use of Magick and all the most abominable Enchantments to call up the Devil, that he should succeed in this Attempt? May not a Magician do the same thing at this day, now Oracles are intirely abolish'd? And would it be reasonable thence to conclude, that Oracles still subsist? You see in the Passage which I\* cited from this Emperor, that he himself acknowledges that all Oracles were ceas'd, and that there was nothing but Magick, which could supply the want of them.

Neither would it be any wonder, if after the extinction of most Oracles, which certainly  
*It would be no wonder, if after the cessation of Oracles, there should be some Authors that*

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\* *Suprà*. p. 169, 170.

happen'd

happen'd before the Reign of *Constantine*, there should be some Heathen Author of that time, who spoke of them still, and mention'd Answers given by them. They had continu'd above two thousand Years. During a Succession of so many Ages they had given an infinite number of Answers. The Temples where the Devils deliver'd these Answers were still subsisting. The Sacrifices and all the other Heathen Ceremonies were perform'd as usually. After all this it was very natural, that many should have been still of the Opinion, that they continu'd to foretel things to come: Many concurring Reasons engag'd the Heathens to believe it, and even to forge false Answers to supply the defect of true ones.

Give me leave to add, that it is not incredible, that the Devil tho' once driven out of an Oracle, may have return'd to it a second and a third time; especially when recall'd by such as were devoted to him, and made use of all necessary means to oblige him to return. It was without doubt very grievous to him to forsake his ancient places of abode, where he had so long and so peaceably enjoy'd the divine Honours, which Men paid him. As therefore he did not leave them without regret, so he made frequent attempts to be restor'd to them. But at last he had been so often driven out of them by the Christians, who encreas'd every day, and was always upon his return so ill treated, that he found himself constrain'd to quit the Field, and turn his pernicious designs another way.

But it's needless to dwell any longer upon this Subject. Whatever interruption or continuance you assign to Oracles, it is sufficient that you acknowledge, they ceas'd after the Birth

of Christ and the preaching of his Gospel, as the Fathers assert; and that this Event can be attributed only to his Power over Devils, and to that which he left to his Disciples and to his Church, to cast them out in his Name. This is what I have prov'd to you by Arguments, which seem to me very evident and persuasive: Yet because you ascribe this miraculous Event to other Causes, I think my self oblig'd to refute them in a few words, still farther to convince you of the truth of what the Fathers have alledg'd.

CHAP. XL You say, that \* *Oracles did not generally cease but with the Pagan Religion, and that did not cease at the coming of Christ.* Then you mention the Edicts of the Christian Emperors against the Temples and the Superstitions of Idolatry: I desire you to consider, first, that before there were any Christian Emperors, Christianity was already establish'd and spread almost over all the World; and the Christians, as *Tertullian* affirms of his time, fill'd whole Cities and Provinces, *Idolatry.*

\* Hist. Diss. 2. ch. 4. p. 257.

† Tertull. in Apolog. p. 30. Hesterni sumus, & vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, palatium, senatum, forum. Sola vobis relinquimus Tempia.

Idem. L. adv. Judæos. cap. 7. p. 189. In quem enim alium universæ gentes crediderunt, nisi in Christum qui jam venit? Cui enim & aliæ gentes crediderunt, Parthi, Medi, Elamitæ & qui inhabitant Mesopotamiam, Armeniam, Phrygiam, Cappadociam, & incolentes Pontum & Asiam & Pamphyliam, immorantes Ægyptum, & regionem Africæ, quæ est trans Cyrenem, Inhabitantes? Romani & incolæ; tunc & in Hierusalem Judæi & cæteræ gentes: Ut jam Getulorum varietates, & Maurorum multi fines; Hispaniarum omnes termini, & Galliarum diversæ Nationes, & Britannorum inaccessa

Provinces in spite of the Rage of Persecutions, which were so far from diminishing their number, that they daily increas'd it. Hereby undoubtedly you'll perceive, that the greatest Miracle of Christianity, which was it's Establishment, ought not to be ascrib'd to the Edicts of the Christian Emperors, as you would insinuate, but to the divine Power of Christ, which was never more illustrious than in this wonderful Establishment, and in the Destruction of Idolatry, that oppos'd all its force against it.

With regard to Oracles in particular, which were the strongest support of this Idolatry, it is certain by the Testimony of the Heathens themselves, that most of them however ceas'd to give Answers long before the time of the Emperor *Constantine*, tho' the Temples of the false Gods, the Sacrifices, and all the other Superstitions did still subsist. If you well consider this, you'll own that it is much more reasonable to attribute at least in part, the extinction of the Pagan Religion to the Cessation of Oracles, than this Cessation to the Extinction of that Religion.

Indeed a false Religion like that, which warranted the greatest Crimes by the exam-

*Most Oracles were silent long before the time of the Emperor Constantine.*

*The ruin of Idolatry ought rather to be imputed to the Cessation of Oracles, than the Cessation of Oracles to the ruin of Idolatry, and why.*

cessa Romanis loca, Christo verò subdita; & Sarmatarum & Dacorum, & Germanorum, & Scytharum; & abditarum multarum Gentium, & Provinciarum, & Insularum multarum nobis ignotarum, & quæ enumerare minus possumus? In quibus omnibus locis Christi nomen qui jam venit, regnat; utpote ante quem omnium civitatum portæ sunt apertæ, & cui nullæ sunt clausæ: Ante quem seræ ferreæ sunt comminutæ, & valvæ æreæ sunt apertæ.

Tertulliano adjuuge Origenem init. L. 4. de Princip. & Plinium secundum, Epistolarum. L. 10. Epist. ad Trajanum, de Christianis.

ple of the Gods it worshipp'd ; which requir'd human Sacrifices, and appointed Games and Feasts accompany'd with the greatest Infamies ; whose most solemn and sacred Mysteries contain'd nothing but Abominations and detestable Obscenities : A Religion which in it's Doctrines and Worship manifestly shock'd Reason and good Manners, could not naturally subsist without being upheld by such kinds of Prodigies and Wonders, as would in some degree bewitch its Followers, and make them shut their Eyes to the extravagance and brutality of its Superstitions. These Wonders, and these false Prodigies were seen particularly in Oracles. In them were Predictions of Things to come, and those often fulfill'd ; sick Persons cur'd by unheard-of Medicines, which they had learn'd and receiv'd in their Sleep from Apparitions of pretended Deities, that had been consulted just before ; Priests and Priestesses transported with a Madness, which appear'd to be wholly Supernatural and Divine ; and an innumerable Company of other Wonders of the like nature. This was what upheld Idolatry, and presented the People with a dazzling outside, which preserv'd them in their Delusion.

But when after the Incarnation of the Son of God, all these Illusions of the Devil were dissipated by the Power of the *Word made Flesh* ; and Idolatry despoil'd of all the appearances it had of Wonderful and Divine ; the extravagance and monstrous deformity of its Superstitions was laid open to the Eyes of all the World, especially when it came to be compar'd with the holiness of Christianity, and the true Miracles by which that has been always warranted ;

ranted; among which that wonderful Power the Christians had to put the Devils or the Gods of the Heathens to silence, to make them own their Imposture, to confound them and cast them out in a thousand manners, was without doubt one of the most illustrious and most effectual to disabuse the Heathen. From that time Paganism being restor'd to it self, and disrob'd of all the false Miracles that upheld it, fell to decay, and was abandon'd even by the most zealous of its Followers. So that the ruin of that Religion was so far from occasioning the Cessation of Oracles, that on the contrary 'twas the silence to which these were reduc'd by Christians, that much contributed to the overthrow of the Pagan Religion.

But you go yet farther: For as if you were CHAP. XII.  
 afraid that some Glory and Advantage should *The examination of what*  
 redound to the Christian Religion from the *Mr. De Fontenelle affirms,*  
 cessation of Oracles, you undertake to prove, *viz. that tho'*  
 that \* *tho' Idolatry had not been abolish'd, yet Oracles would have come to an end.* You produce *Idolatry had not been abolish'd, yet Oracles would have come to an end. The Reasons which he brings for this.*  
 three Reasons for it. You take the first from the Contempt, into which Oracles were fallen by reason of the † small importance of those Matters, on which they were consulted after the Birth of Christ; and from the || little Esteem which the Romans had of them, when now become Masters of the World. You ground the second upon ||| the great prejudice done to Oracles by three Sects of Philosophers, the Cynicks,

\* Hist. Diss. 2. ch. 5. p. 291.

† Hist. ibid. p. 299, &c.

|| Hist. ibid. p. 302.

||| Hist. Diss. 2. c. 6. p. 311.

the *Peripateticks*, and the *Epicureans*, who you say, labour'd continually to disabuse the World of their Cheats. You draw the Third from those very \* *Cheats*, which were too gross, not to be at last discover'd.

*A confutation  
of the first  
Reason drawn  
from the Cheats  
and the Crimes  
of the Idola-  
trous Priests.*

I have already shewn you, that the Cheats and Impostures which were in Oracles, could be imputed only to Devils, and that if the Idolatrous Priests had been the Authors of them, they would not have subsisted for so long a time as they did, that is for above two thousand Years. The Crimes of the Priests of which you speak, were not always committed in Temples, where Oracles were deliver'd; nor did those Priests begin to commit these Crimes after the Birth of our Saviour. *Herodotus* † whom you cite †, is a good Proof of this; and if notwithstanding all these Infamies, Oracles and Idolatry did still subsist in all their splendour before the Incarnation of the Son of God, you have no reason to say, that it was these very Cheats and Abominations, which occasion'd their ceasing after his Birth.

*An Answer to  
second, taken  
from the ralle-  
ry of some Phi-  
losophers upon  
Oracles.*

I have also shewn you, that the Three great Sects of Philosophers, who you say, laugh'd at Oracles, were only a very small number of *Cynicks* and *Epicureans*, whose Authority was very contemptible among the Antients, and infinitely less considerable than that of all the other Philosophers, and of the *Platonists* and *Stoicks* in particular, who maintain'd Oracles with all their force, and held those as Impious

\* Hist. Diss. 2. ch. 7. p. 315, &c.

† Herodot. L. 1. Hist.

† Hist. Diss. 1. ch. 8. p. 97.

Persons and Atheists, who gave no credit to them. Since the Birth of our Saviour all the Philosophers were more fond of them than ever. They maintain'd them with great Zeal, to defend the common Cause of their Religion, which was falling to decay. The Epicureans themselves, forgetting upon this occasion the Principles and Interests of their Sect, advanc'd the credit of Oracles all they could, as appears in the Book of *Celsus*, where that *Epicurean*, to the Prophets of the Old Testament produc'd by the Christians to prove the truth of their Religion, opposes the Oracles of *Greece*, exalting them far above those Prophets, and speaking of them as one persuaded of their Excellence, and of the great Advantages that had accrued from them.

This passionate fondness of the Philosophers for Oracles and Divination proceeded then even to madness. To these for the most part they added Magick and Enchantments, which they look'd upon as they did on Oracles, as extraordinary favours of the Gods, and Arts wholly Divine. To be convinc'd of this, you need only read the Lives of these Philosophers, written by *Emperius*, and recollect what kind of Men among the rest, *Porphyrus*, *Iamblichus*, *Adesius*, *Chrysanthus*, *Maximus*, and *Julian* the *Apostate* were, and what were the Doctrines and Myste-

\* *Celsus* apud *Originem*, L. 7. p. 336. τὰ μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν Πυθίας, ἢ Δωδωνίων, ἢ Κλαεῖα, ἢ ἐν Βεαρχιδάαις, ἢ ἐν Ἀμικῶν, ἢ ὑπὸ μυειώσῃ ἄλλων θεοπόρων περιεργμῶνα, ὑφ' ὧν ἐπεικῶς πάντα γῆ καὶ ὠκείῃ, ταῦτα μὲν ἐδένι λόγῳ τίθεντο. τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν Ἰσδαία τοῦ ἐκείνων τερπῶ λεχθέντα ἢ μὴ λεχθέντα, καὶ ὥσπερ εἰώθασιν ἔτι νῦν οἱ περὶ φοινίκῳ καὶ Παλαυσίνῳ, ταῦτα γε θαυμάσια καὶ ἀπαελλακτὰ ἦεν.

ries of their *Theurgick Philosophy*. From thence it will be easie to conclude, that the decay and at last the extinction of Oracles, is not to be attributed to that contempt the Philosophers had of them, either before or after the Birth of Christ.

An explication  
of a Passage of  
Plutarch ill un-  
derstood by the  
Author of the  
History,

You say farther, speaking of the bad Verses of which Oracles were compos'd, \* *That these Philosophers laugh'd at such, as by a certain way of reasoning which overthrew it self, would have equally concluded these Verses to have been made by the Gods, whether they had been good or bad.* This is not that *inversed Argument*, of which *Plutarch* <sup>b</sup> speaks, from whom you have taken this Reflection, and the piece of History that you have given us with it. It is thus, This Author in one of his *Dialogues* introduces an *Epicurean* disputing with some who alledg'd, that it was not to be wonder'd at if the Verses of Oracles transgress'd the ordinary Rules of Poetry, since they came from *Apollo*, who was above all these Rules; nay that these faults, and this very negligence was a Proof that he was Author of them. To which the *Epicurean* replies, that others perhaps inverting this Argument might with more reason conclude, that those Oracles did not come from *Apollo*, because they were so faulty, and so contrary to the Rules of Poetry. The former

\* Hist. Diff. 2. c. 6. p. 312, 313.

<sup>b</sup> Plutarch. L. de Pythiz Oraculis, p. 705. Τέτό φησιν ὁ βίαν ἐνίης τῇ λίσαν πάχεν ὅταν ἀδαστέρωσι· διὸ καὶ τοὺς χρησμούς ἐνιοὶ φήσουσιν ἢ καλῶς ἔχεν, ὅτι τῷ θεῷ εἰσιν ἄλλοι δ', ἢ θεῷ μὴ εἶναι, ὅτι παύλας ἔχουσιν.

argu'd thus. These Verses come from *Apollo*, therefore it is no wonder that they offend against the Rules of Poetry, because *Apollo* is above all these Rules. The *Epicurean* inverted the Argument and answer'd, These Verses offend against the Rules of Poetry, therefore it is evident they do not come from *Apollo*, the Father and the God of Poetry. Take the pains to read this Passage of *Plutarch* over again, and if I be not mistaken you will find, that you have not understood him right, nor well comprehended what an *inverted Argument* is. Yet you might have seen another instance of it in *Cicero*\*, very like this and upon the same Subject. But this is only a Trifle.

I come then to your third Reason, by which CHAP XIII.  
 you pretend to shew, that tho' Paganism had *A Confutation*  
 not been abolish'd, yet Oracles would have *of the third*  
 ceas'd. You take it from the small Importance *Reason alledge'd*  
 of those Matters, upon which they were usu- *by Mr. de Fon-*  
 ally consulted after the coming of Christ, and *tenelle, to ex-*  
 from the Contempt which the *Romans* had of *plain the Cessa-*  
 them. To Answer this in a few Words. I *tion of Oracles.*  
 say that Oracles were consulted before the Birth  
 of our Saviour on Matters of as small impor-  
 tance as after it; and upon such after his Birth,  
 as were at least of as much importance, as any  
 upon which they had been consulted before it:  
 And by consequence the cause of their Cessa-

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\* Cicero L.ii. de Divinat. p. 4868. Ita enim cum magis properant concludere solent. Si Dei sunt, est divinatio: sunt autem Dei: est ergo Divinatio. Multo est probabilius: non est autem Divinatio: non sunt ergo Dei.

tion and of their Ruin, is not that here alledg'd by you.

*Before the Birth of Christ Oracles were consulted on Matters of as small importance, as after it.*

To be convinc'd of this you need only call to mind, that all sorts of Persons crowded promiscuously to consult Oracles upon their Affairs. Thus if Princes and Republicks apply'd to them upon their Enterprises and Occasions, which were often of great Importance: Private Persons, who are always more numerous, advis'd with them also concerning theirs, which could be only of little Consequence. Do but run over the Oracles which *Eusebius*, and other both antient and modern Authors have collected, and you will find many of them deliver'd to private Persons, concerning their Marriages, their Children, their Journeys, their Distempers, their Commerce, and a thousand other Trifles. It is from thence that *Eusebius* <sup>d</sup> after *Oenamaüs* draws an Argument to prove, that Oracles could come neither from God, nor from good Spirits. He first shews <sup>e</sup>, that for the most part they answer'd only to foolish Questions; then <sup>f</sup>, that their Answers were only trivial; and lastly, <sup>g</sup> that they commended Knaves and Miscreants, such as the Poet *Archilochus*, and *Cleomedes* the Wrestler,

*After the Birth of Christ Oracles were consulted upon matters at least of as much importance as before it.*

Again, after the coming of our Lord Oracles were consulted upon matters at least of as much importance, as before, and that as long as they subsisted, and at the very time of their decay and final ruin. 'This we may see by the

<sup>d</sup> Euseb. Præp. Evang. L. 4.

<sup>e</sup> Euseb. ibid. cap. 29.

<sup>f</sup> Euseb. ibid. c. 30.

<sup>g</sup> Euseb. ibid. c. 31, &c.

*Roman Emperours, and Persons of the first* Consideration, who advis'd with them concerning their Enterprises, and even upon the Fate of the Empire. I shall bring some Instances of it presently, and 'tis easie to find a great number of them in *Suetonius, Tacitus, Spartian, Xiphilin*, and the other *Roman Historians*. The small Importance therefore of the Matters concerning which Oracles were consulted after the Birth of Christ, was not the cause of their Cessation.

I can't see what could persuade you, that the *Romans* had no esteem for Oracles. The Proof you bring of it is, that they were much addicted to their *Augurs* and *Soothsayers*. That is true, but one is no impediment to the other, as we find by the *Greeks* themselves, who were no less addicted to all these Superstitions than to their Oracles. On the contrary, that extraordinary Passion which the *Romans* had for their *Augurs* and *Soothsayers*, carry'd them naturally to have a like regard for Oracles. From the great Consideration in which these Diviners were amongst them, we may learn what an infinite esteem they had for Divination, and what an ardent desire of knowing things to come. They were cautious therefore not to condemn Oracles, which promis'd them a far more clear and certain knowledge of futurity, than any other kind of Divination; and by all the Circumstances that accompany'd them, appear'd to have something in them, both more wonderful and more divine.

Besides they could have no fondness for the Books of the *Sybils*, without having the same also for Oracles, since they own'd as you may learn

CHAP. XIV  
The *Romans* were so far from despising Oracles, that they were very much addicted to them.  
The first Proof taken from their great Passion for Divination, Augurs, Soothsayers, and their Books of the *Sybils*.

There were  
some Romans,  
who of all sorts  
of Divinations  
esteem'd none  
but Oracles.

learn from *Cicero*<sup>1</sup>, that both these sprung from the same Fountain, that is, from Enthusiasm and Divine Madness. Again, there were some Romans, who despis'd the Art of *Angurs* and *Soothsayers*, and of all kinds of Divination esteem'd none but Oracles; nor acknowledg'd any else as true. Such among others was *Quintus*<sup>2</sup> the Brother of *Cicero*, who without doubt was not single in his Opinion. It was not therefore the great Passion, which the Romans had for their *Angurs* and *Soothsayers*, that made them despise Oracles.

The Romans  
adopted all the  
superstitions of  
foreign Nations.

You object, that Oracles came originally from Greece. That may be true; tho' I can shew you some in *Italy* very near as antient as those in Greece, as among others that of *Faunus*, of which *Virgil*<sup>3</sup> speaks; and that of *Mars* mention'd by *Dionysius Halicarnassens*<sup>4</sup>. But tho'

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<sup>1</sup> *Cicero* L. i. de Divin. p. 4815. his igitur assentior, qui duo genera Divinationis esse dixerunt, unum quod particeps esset artis: alterum quod arte careret — carent autem arte, qui non ratione aut conjecturâ observatis ac notatis signis, sed concitatione quadam animi, aut soluto liberoque motu futura præsentiant. Quod & somniantibus sæpè contingit, & nonnunquam vaticinantibus per furorem, ut *Bacchis* *Boeotius*, ut *Epimenides* *Cres*, ut *Sybilla Erythræa*. Cujus generis Oracula etiam habenda sunt, non ea, quæ æquatis sortibus ducuntur, sed illa, quæ instinctu divino afflatuque fundantur.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*. L. ii. de Divin. p. 4890. Non ignoro, Quinte, te semper ita sensisse, ut de cæteris divinandi generibus dubitares: ista duo furoris & somni, quæ à liberâ mente fluere videntur, probares.

<sup>3</sup> *Virgil*. L. vii. *Æneidos*, l. 81.

At Rex sollicitus monstris, Oracula *Fauni*

Fatidici Genitoris adit.

Hinc Italæ Gentes, omnisque, *Oenotria* *Tellus*

In dubiis responsa petant.

<sup>4</sup> *Dionys. Halicarn.* L. i. *Rom. Antiq.* interprete *Æmilio Porto*, c. 14, p. 12. Tiora verò, quæ & *Materia* dicitur ad trecent-

tho' this were true, was it not the custom and policy of the *Romans*, to adopt all the Deities and Superstitions of the *Greeks* and *Egyptians*? Had not *Isis*, *Anubis*, *Osiris*, *Serapis* the liberty of being worship'd at *Rome*? Had not they Altars and Temples " and Priests there? Whence had the *Romans* their *Bona Dea* " and her Mysteries, but from *Pessinus* in *Phrygia*, whither they sent a famous Embassy to conduct her to *Rome*? Did not *Æsculapius* °, to whom they erected a celebrated Temple in the Isle of the *Tyber*, come from *Epidaurus*, to which place the Senate sent Deputies of consideration to invite him to their City, after they had learn'd from the Oracle of *Delphos*, that it was this pretended Deity, who should deliver them from the Pestilence, with which they were then miserably afflicted. You know without doubt what pass'd upon that occasion, how the false *Æsculapius* in the Form of a Serpent repair'd into the Ambassadors Ship, what Honours they paid to him, and by what prodigies he signaliz'd himself. All which may suffice to oblige the most incredulous, either to give the Lye to all the *Roman* Historians who relate this Fact, or to own that this Serpent was only a Devil in disguise.

trecensesium inde stadium. In hac antiquissimum Martis Oraculum fuisse fertur, non ab simile illi (ut statim) quod Dodonæ quondam fuisse fabulis proditur.

° Sextus Rufus & P. Victor de Regionibus Urbis, Reg. in, p. 157. Spartianus in Cæsar. p. 315. Eutropius, L. vii. c. 18. Aelius Lampridius in Alex. Severo, c. 26. p. 345. Pauli Diaconi Histor. Miscell. L. ix. c. 12. p. 859.

° Plinius L. de viris illustribus. Herodianus, L. i. Hist. c. 2.

° Valerius Maximus, L. i. c. 8. Plinius, ibid. 8c.

To this pretend-  
ed Piety they  
ascrib'd the  
prosperity of  
their Arms, and  
the glory of  
their Empire.  
Why of all Re-  
ligions they re-  
fus'd none but  
the true.

All Superstitions therefore, and from every Country were very welcome at Rome. The Romans were so far from despising them, that they gave them an honourable Reception: And to this so universal a Piety, which they shew'd in receiving them all, according to the observation of St. *Augustin*<sup>p</sup>, they ascrib'd the Prosperity of their Arms, and the Glory of their Empire. There was no Religion, nor any God, except the true, which they could not suffer; and the only reason that they had no toleration for the true God, was undoubtedly, says the same Father, because they saw that by receiving and worshipping him, they must necessarily reject and abandon all the rest.

CHAP. XV. To these general Reflections I will add some that are more particular, and that directly regard our Subject: I take the first from the manner in which the Roman Authors have spoke of Oracles, and that has always been with great esteem.  
*Livy*<sup>a</sup> calls that of *Delphos* the most famous  
 as *Livy*.

<sup>a</sup> *Augustinus* L. i. de Consensu Evangelistarum, c. 12. p. 267. Solebant autem Romani Deos Gentium quas subjugabant colendo propitiare, & eorum sacra suscipere. Hoc de Deo Gentis Hebrææ, cum eam vel oppugnaverunt vel vicerunt, facere noluerunt; credo, quod videbant, si ejus Dei sacra reciperent, qui se solum, deletis etiam simulacris, colijberet, dimittenda esse omnia, quæ prius colenda susceperant, quorum religionibus imperium suum crevisse arbitrabantur.

<sup>a</sup> *Titus Livius* L. i. Decad. 1. c. 56. p. 109. Delphos admaximè inclytum in terris Oraculum mittere statuit, neq; responsa sortium ulli alii committere ausus, duos filios per ignotas eâ tempestate terras, ignotiora maria in Graciam milit, &c.

Oracle

Oracle in the World, and among others relates two of it Answers, which he has taken great care to insert in his History, because the consequences of both of them were very considerable. The first was given to the Sons of *Tarquinius Superbus*, and to *Junius Brutus*, who alone, says the Historian, understood the true meaning of it, and from thence took occasion to expel the Kings from *Rome*, and to found the *Republick*, of which he was the first *Consul*. The second Answer he mentions, was that given to the Ambassadors, whom the Senate many Years after sent again to *Delphos*, to consult that Oracle concerning the success of the War, which they then had, with the People of *Veii*, whom the *Romans* overcame according to the Prediction of *Apollo*, after having accomplish'd what he requir'd in his Answer.

*Tacitus* speaks of several Oracles, and especially of that of *Claros*: And 'tis evident by his manner of describing this Oracle, and by that desire he testifies *Germanicus* had to consult it, that neither he nor *Germanicus* made light of this kind of Divination.

*Valerius Maximus* appears throughout affected with Oracles, and convinc'd of the divinity of them. He never speaks of them but with respect, and as a Man persuaded, that all which was in them was from the Power of the immortal Gods. He mentions in particular the Ora-

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\* Idem L. v. Decad. 1. c. 15. p. 456. Sed authorem levem, nec satis fidum super tantâ re Patres rati, decrevere Legatos sorteq; Oraculi Pythici expectandas, &c.

† Tacitus Annal. L. ii. c. 54. p. 63.

cle ' deliver'd to *Appian* by *Apollo* of *Delphos*, concerning the War of *Pharsalia*, and shews how it was exactly fulfill'd with respect to that very Person, tho' he did not comprehend the meaning of it: He speaks of the Punishment of a certain *Sophist* nam'd *Daphidas*, who had a mind to surprize that God by his captious Questions, and suffer'd, says he, for his foolish Temerity, which he carry'd so far, as to desire to mock the Gods.

**Suetonius.**

*Suetonius* \* mentions the design which *Tiberius* had to ruin the Oracles that were near *Rome*, because he fear'd least they might be consulted concerning the time of his Death. But, says this Author, he did not dare to execute his purpose, being deterr'd by the veneration Men had for the *Lots* of *Præneste*, and by a Prodigy that happen'd upon this Occasion.

**Pliny the elder.**

The Testimony of *Pliny* the Elder is especially worth considering. If this Author could have suspected, that Oracles were only the cheats of Idolatrous Priests, he would not have fail'd to treat them as such with the utmost Contempt: He that laughs at the Gods, at Providence, at the Immortality of the Soul, and at all sorts of Omens and Presages. Yet when he speaks of Oracles, Atheist as he was, he owns ", that they foretel things to come by the

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\* *Valerius Maximus* L. i. c. 8.

" *Suetonius* in *Tiberio* c. 63. Vicina verò Urbi Oracula etiam disjicere conatus est, sed Majestate Prænestinarum sortium terribus destitit.

" *Plinius* L. ii. Nat. Hist. c. 92. Fatidici specus, quorum exhalatione temulenti futura præcinnunt, ut *Delphis* nobilissimo Oraculo.

the means of Exhalations. He brings the Oracle of *Delphos* for an instance, which he calls the most illustrious of all: And he attributes this virtue of Exhalations to the only Deity he owns, viz. to *Natura*, and the variety of its productions.

*Justin* <sup>2</sup> speaks of a great multitude of O-*Justia* racles, and relates many of their Answers; but he enlarges most upon that of *Delphos*, which he describes, and upon the Punishment of the *Gauls* under *Brennus*, who went to plunder it. He does not fail to ascribe this Punishment, and the Prodigies that accompany'd it, to the Power of the God, who presided over this Oracle.

*Quintus Curtius* <sup>7</sup> gives us a large descripti-*Quintus Cur-* on of the Oracle of *Jupiter Ammon*; and tho' <sup>tias.</sup> he imputes some Flattery to the Answers, which the Priests of that Idol gave to *Alexander*, yet he lets fall no Expression concerning the Oracle, that can be look'd upon as a Mark of his despising it. On the contrary, he mentions certain circumstances, which give evidence of his persuasion, that a Deity presided over it.

*Pomponius Mela* <sup>2</sup> makes a short *Encomium* *Pomponius* upon the same Oracle, when he says it was of *Mela, &c.* approv'd Faith and Veracity.

Oraculo. Quibus in rebus quid possit aliud causæ asserre morationem quispiam, quam diffusæ perennæ naturæ subinde aliter atq; aliter numen erumpens.

<sup>2</sup> Justinus L. xxiv. c. 6, 7, 8.

<sup>7</sup> Quintus Curtius L. iv. c. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Pomponius Mela L. i. c. 8. Ammonis oraculum fidei inclytæ.

To these Authors I could add *Pliny* the Younger, *Alian*, *Anlus Gellius*, *Solinus*, *Macrobius*, and the Poets; as *Virgil*, *Lucan*, *Ovid*, *Seneca*, who have all spoken of Oracles, as Men really persuaded of their Divinity.

*Cicero speaks of Oracles as an Academick, allowing them in one place and rejecting them in another; for which reason his Testimony is not to be taken.*

You will no doubt bring *Cicero* as an Objection, who laughs at Oracles in his second Book *De Divinatione*. But you may consider, that he respects and maintains them in his first Book, and that in both he speaks as an *Academick*, who in pursuance of the principles of his Sect, equally upholds and overthrows both sides of the Question, doubting of every thing, and affirming nothing, as he himself confesses \* in the beginning of this second Book. This in my Opinion you ought to have consider'd, before you had made use of his Authority (as you have done in some part of your History) which would then have appear'd to you not so proper to decide the Question in hand. I could easily prove from other Books of that Author, where he speaks less as an *Academick*, that he was no despiser of Oracles. But his Actions prove this much better than his Writings; for in his first Voyage into *Asia* he consulted the Oracle of *Delphos*, as *Plutarch* assures us, and that is a good Argument that he did not despise it.

*He consulted that of Delphos.*

But

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\* Cicero L. ii. de Divin. paulò post initium. p. 4856. Dicendum est mihi igitur ad ea, quæ sunt à te dicta: sed ita, nihil ut affirmem, quæram omnia, dubitans plerumque & mihi ipse diffidens. Si enim aliquid certi haberem quod dicerem, ego ipse divinarem, qui esse divinationem nego.

<sup>b</sup> Plutarchus in Cicer. p. 1581. Ὁ γὰρ κικέρων ἐκπεσὼν μετὰς ὅτι τὴν πολιτείαν ἀρνούμενος, καὶ χρησμοῦ τινὸς ἀπημύ-

But a yet more evident proof, that the Ro-  
mans did not despise Oracles, is that they had  
several of them in and about Rome, as well  
as in others parts of Italy. This you acknow-  
ledge, but you add, That \* the small number  
of these Oracles only makes a very inconsiderable  
exception to what you have said. I cannot be of  
your Opinion, for these Oracles I speak of,  
were not in so small a number as you would  
persuade us: Witness that of Geryon near Pa-  
dova, mention'd by Suetonius<sup>c</sup>; that of Aescu-  
lapius in Rome it self, of which Gruter's in-  
scription<sup>d</sup> (to say nothing of others) is an  
evident proof; that of the God Clitumnus de-  
scrib'd by Pliny the Younger<sup>e</sup>; the Lots of  
Præfets spoken of by Suetonius<sup>f</sup>, and those of  
Antium by Macrobius<sup>g</sup>; and many other Au-  
thors: The Oracle of Augustus, of which you  
your self do not doubt. To these you may  
add that of Faunus mention'd by Virgil<sup>h</sup>; that  
of the Deus Vaticanus attested by Aulus Gellius<sup>i</sup>;  
that of Mars which I have above cited from Dio-

ἀπηνελύθη ἡ ἐρμῆς ἐρημῶν ὅς αὐτῷ ἡ Διὶ θεοῖς Θεὸν  
ἰσχυρὸν ἐξέλεγε, προσέταξεν ἡ Πυθία ἡ ἑαυτῇ  
φύσιν, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἡ πολλῶν δόξαν ἡγήματα ποιῆσαι  
βίη.

\* Hist. Diss. 2. ch. 3. p. 308.

<sup>c</sup> Suetonius in Tiber. cap. 14. Et. mox cum Illiricum pe-  
tens juxta Patavium adiisset Geryonis Oraculum, &c.

<sup>d</sup> Gruter. Inscript. pag. 71. citat. supra. p. 141.

<sup>e</sup> Plinius junior. Epistolar. L. 8. Epist. ad Romanum.

<sup>f</sup> Suetonius in Tiber. cap. 63.

<sup>g</sup> Macrobius Saturnal. L. 1. cap. 23. p. 262.

<sup>h</sup> Virg. L. 7. Aeneid. loco supra relato. p. 218.

<sup>i</sup> Aulus Gellius Noct. Attic. L. 16. cap. 17.

*nyfius Halicarnassens* <sup>k</sup>; that of *Podalirius* in *Calabria*, of which *Lycophron* <sup>l</sup> and *Tzetzes* make mention; that of *Apollo* at *Baia* spoken of by *Capitolinus* <sup>m</sup>; that of *Hercules* at *Tybur* cited by *Statius* <sup>n</sup>; the subterranean Oracle near *Cuma* mention'd by *Strabo* <sup>o</sup>; that of *Apollo* at *Aguileia* of which *Herodian* <sup>p</sup>, and Lastly that of *Jupiter* firnam'd *Pistor*, of which *Ovid* <sup>q</sup> and *Lactantius* <sup>r</sup> speak. This great number which I could yet augment, is in my Opinion abundantly sufficient to prove, that the *Romans* had Oracles in as great veneration as the *Greeks*: And I know not if any Province in *Greece*, not excepting *Bæotia* it self particularly renown'd for Oracles, could be able to furnish us with more instances.

The State, and the Emperours among the Romans gave no less credit to Oracles, than private Persons

Accordingly, as if you a little distrust'd the truth of your Proposition, you add, \* *That private Persons among the Romans might give credit to Oracles, but the State did not.* From what I have mention'd out of *Livy* you might have observ'd, that the State did not differ from private Persons in this particular, since the Senate sent an Embassy to the Oracle of

<sup>k</sup> Dionys. Halicarn. L. 1. Antiquit. Rom. loco supra descripto. p. 218, 219.

<sup>l</sup> Lycophron in Cassandra, ad quem Tzetzes, p. 164. Εἰάθασι οἱ Δαῶνιοι ἥτοι οἱ καλαυροὶ ἐν μνησῆϊς καθάδιδεν ἐν τῷ τάρφῳ ᾧ Ποδολίρειν, καὶ καθ' ὕπνου λαμβάνειν χρησμούς ἐκ αὐτοῦ.

<sup>m</sup> Capitolin. in Clod. Albino. cap. 5.

<sup>n</sup> Silius Sylv. L. 1. Carm. 3.

<sup>o</sup> Strabo Geogr. L. 5. p. 243.

<sup>p</sup> Herodian. L. 8. cap. 3. p. 612.

<sup>q</sup> Ovid. L. 6. Fastorum. l. 350.

<sup>r</sup> Lactant. Divin. Instit. L. 1. cap. 20. p. 49.

\* Hist. ibid. p. 309.

*Delphos*, to consult it about the War which they then had with the People of *Veii*; and having receiv'd an Answer, apply'd themselves with great Diligence to the performance of what that answer directed them, so far as to depose the *Tribunes* of the Army, because they believ'd that to be the subject of the Oracle's complaint. In consequence of which *Camillus* their General press'd the Enemy more vigorously, not doubting but he should overcome them, according to what the Oracle had promised: And being just going to give the Assault to their capital City, he fail'd not to put *Apollo* in mind with a great deal of Solemnity and Religion, that it was under his Guidance, and in pursuance of his Promises, that he went to conquer that City, and that he dedicated to him by way of acknowledgment, a tenth part of the Spoil which he should there take.

You might have likewise observ'd, that it was not till after they had consulted the Oracle of *Delphos* upon the Pestilence which then wasted *Rome*, that the Senate brought *Æsculapius* from *Epidaurus* with so great Pomp, as *Ovid* relates it: Tho' *Livy* and *Valerius Maximus* say, 'twas after they had consulted the Books of the *Sybil*. But both Accounts may be true.

<sup>1</sup> Titus Livius Decad. 1. L. 5. cap. 21. p. 464. Tunc Dictator auspicio egressus, cum edixisset ut arma milites caperent: Tuo ductu, inquit, Pythice Apollo, tuoq; numine instinctus pergo ad delendam urbem Veios, tibiq; hinc decimam partem prædæ voveo.

<sup>2</sup> Ovid. Metamorph. L. 15. l. 630.  
Auxilium cœleste petunt, mediamq; tenentis  
Orbis humum Delphos adeunt Oracula Phœbi.

Nor did the *Romans* change this Conduct under their Emperors; for *Tiberius*, as you observe your self, consulted the Oracle of *Ger-ryon*; *Nero* \* that of *Delphos*; *Germanicus* \* that of *Claros*; *Caligula* \* that of *Antium*; *Vespa-sian* \* that of the God *Carmelus*, worshipp'd on the Mountain of that name; a Pagan Deity, which some without Reason have thought to be the true God. *Titus* \* consulted the Oracle of *Venus* of *Paphos*; *Trajan* \* that of the God of *Heliopolis*; *Adrian* \* that of *Jupiter Nicephorus*; *Severus* \* that of *Jupiter Belus*: *Caracalla* \* with an incredible Curiosity consulted all that he could find. All this in my Opinion proves evidently, that these Masters of the Universe were as much addicted to Oracles as the *Greeks*.

*The Conclusion of this Third Part of the Answer in favour of the Opinion concerning the cessation of Oracles, generally receiv'd among all Christians.*

I conclude from all this, that it being im-possible to impute the Cessation of Oracles, ei-ther to the Contempt which the *Romans* had of them, or to the Raillery of the Philoso-phers; to the Cheats of Idolatrous Priests, or the Crimes committed by their encouragement; or Lastly, to the Edicts of the Christian Em-

\* Suetonius in *Nerone*, cap. 40. Ut verò consulto Delphis Apolline Sepuagesimum ac Tertiū annum cavendum sibi audivir, &c.

† Tacit. *Annal.* L. 2. loco citato. p. 221.

‡ Sueton. in *Caligula*, cap. 57. Monuerunt & sortes Antia-tinz ut à Cassio caveret.

§ Idem in *Vespas.* cap. 5. Apud Judzam Carmeli Dei O-raculum consulentem, &c.

• Idem in *Tito*. cap. 5. Adisq; Paphiz Veneris Oraculo-dum de navigatione consulit, etiam de imperii speconfir-matus est.

• Macrob. *Saturn.* L. 1. cap. 23. loco cit. p.

• Spartianus in *Hadriano*.

• Xiphilinus in *Caracalla*. p. 438.

• Herodian. L. 4. p. 354.

perors against the Superstitions of Idolatry : We must therefore of necessity ascribe it to the Power of Christ over Devils, the Authors of those Oracles, as all Christians have beliv'd till now, and as the Fathers have so evidently both asserted and prov'd.

Thus, Sir, I have answer'd your *History*; <sup>The Conclusion</sup> and in doing it I assure you, I had no other <sup>of the whole</sup> Motive, than that of sustaining the Truth, the <sup>Book, and the</sup> Authority of the Fathers, the Glory of the <sup>Motives on</sup> Christian Religion, and of Christ himself; to <sup>which it was</sup> which the Paradox of Mr. *Pan-Dale* might have been prejudicial, when maintain'd and adopted by a Person of your Parts and Merit, who by the variety and agreeableness of his Works has gotten so fair a Reputation among the Learned. Tho' I am not of that number I may truly say, that no Man has more respect for you than I, or more sincerely admires those great Talents, of which you are Master, in writing so politely upon so many Subjects, and in such different manners.

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